

BONUS SECTION! THE WRESTLING BOOK OF LISTS!

THE WRESTLER

THE **Wrestler**®

THE

ROCK!

NO. 1 ON THE JABRONI HIT LIST!

ALSO INSIDE ...

- Stars Who Jumped!
- Awesome-Van Dam Preview!
- Q & A: Kurt Angle

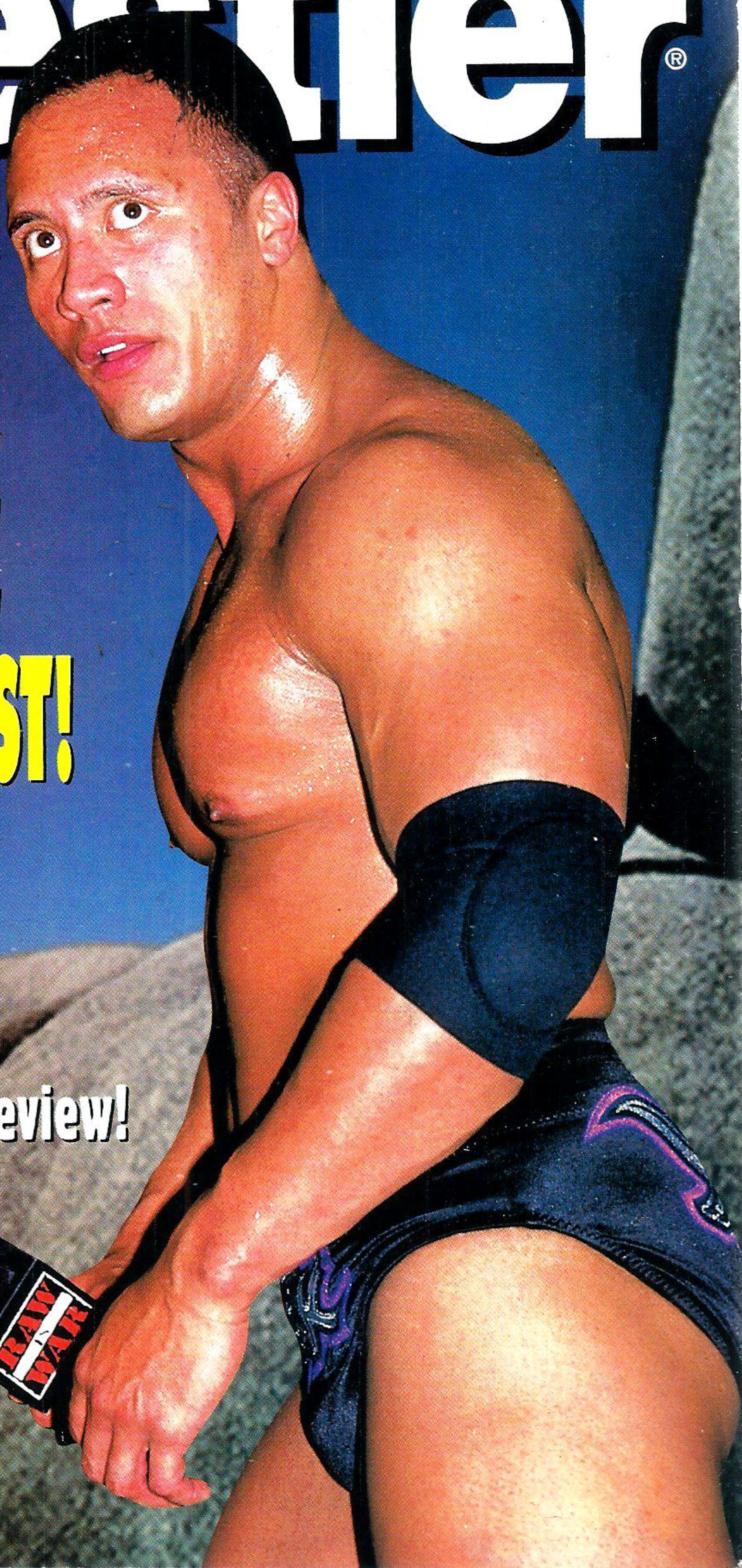
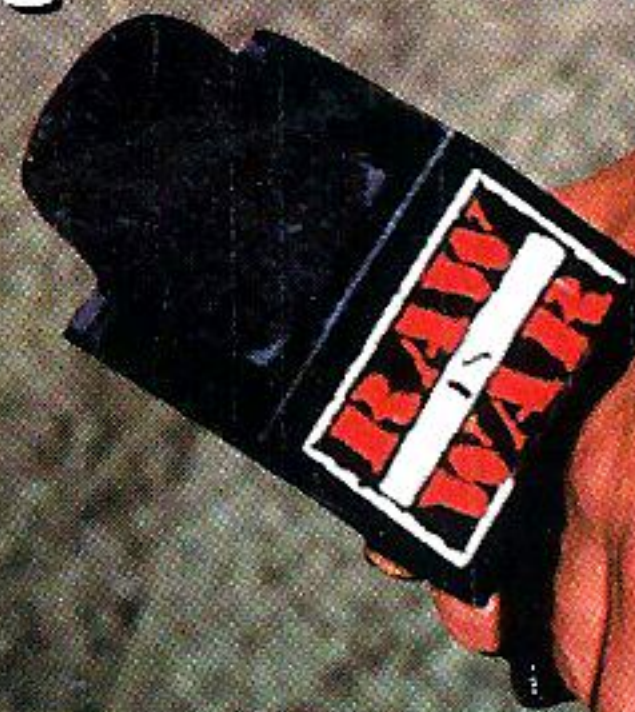
JUNE 2000

\$3.50 U.S. \$5.25 CANADA £2.65 U.K.



0 74470 00389 2

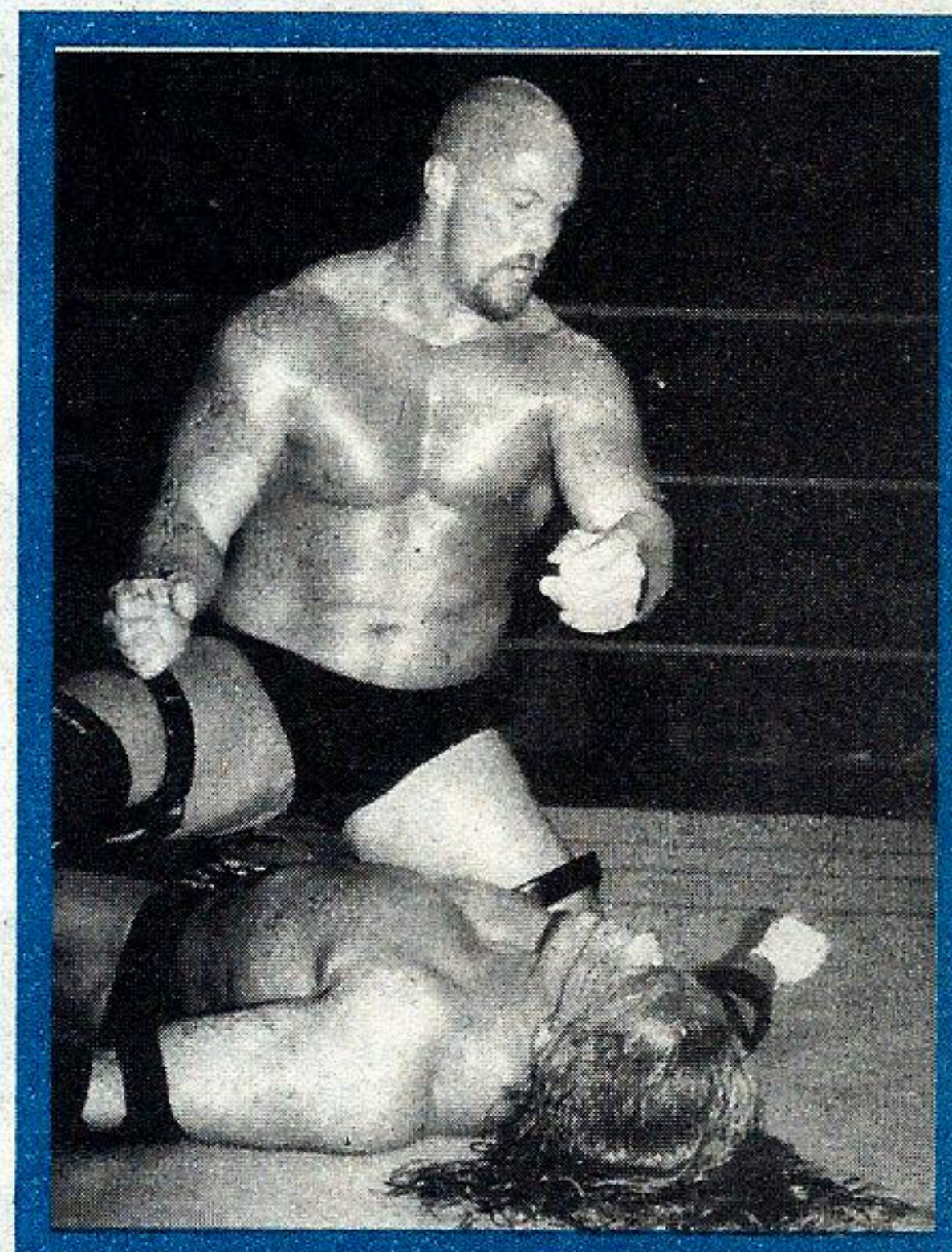
06



Wrestler

DEPARTMENTS

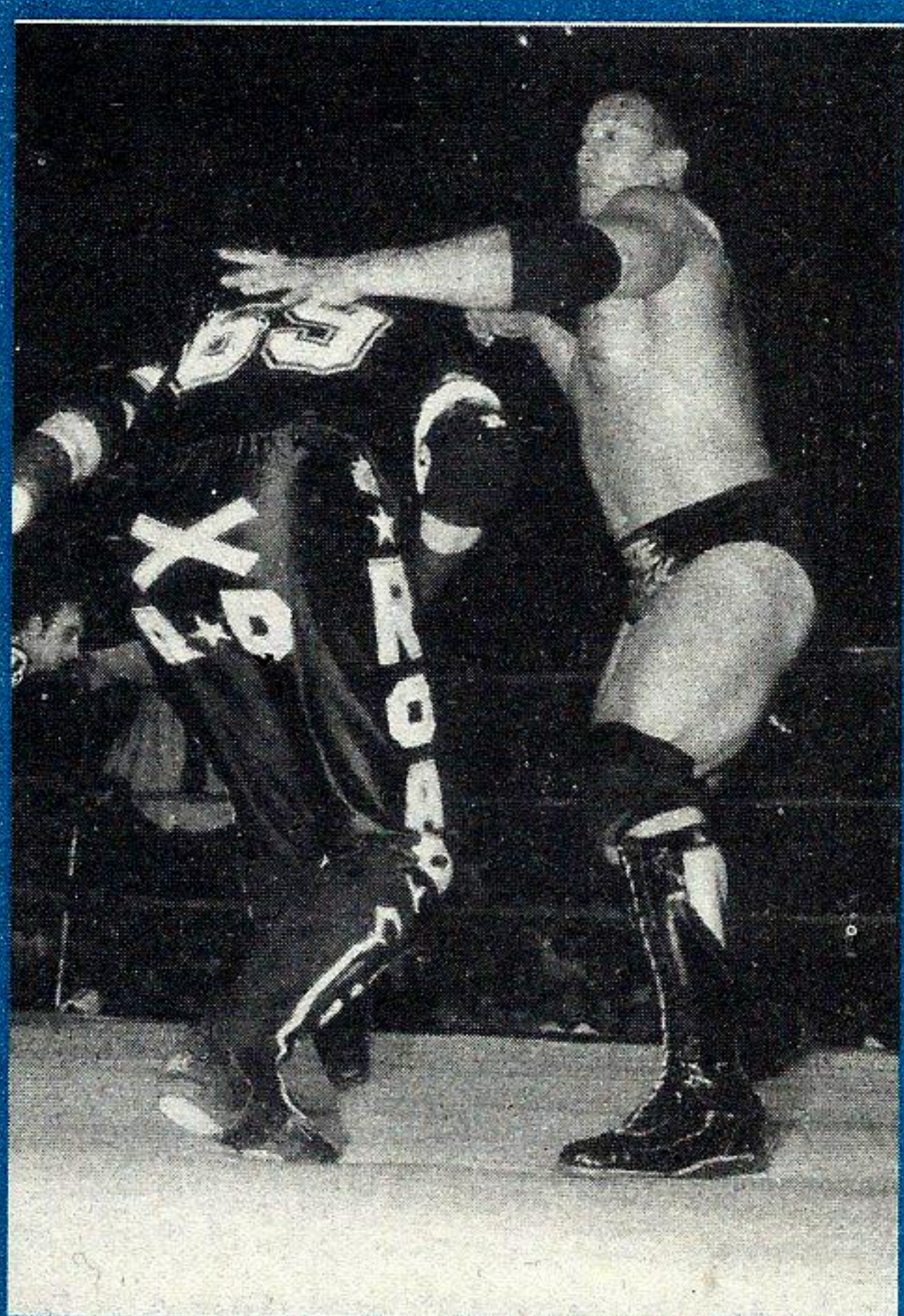
- 4 YOUR LETTERS
- 6 WHAT'S HAPPENING by Dan Murphy
- 8 NO HOLDS BARRED with Will Welsh
- 10 BLINDSIDED by Harry Burkett
- 12 THUMBS UP, THUMBS DOWN
- 14 CORRESPONDENTS REPORTS
- 16 YOU ASKED US
- 18 INTRODUCING VINCE GOODNITE
- 20 Q & A: KURT ANGLE
- 24 X-RAY: RIKISHI PHATU
- 26 MATT BROCK REMEMBERS
- 28 SPOTLIGHT ON VADER
- 30 WRESTLING SCRAPBOOK
- 78 THE WRESTLER CLASSIC (June 1985)
- 84 OFFICIAL WRESTLING RATINGS
- 86 RATINGS ANALYSIS



PAGE 34

FEATURES

PAGE 52



- 34 **SPECIAL SECTION!**
THE WRESTLING BOOK OF LISTS
Want to know the top 10 nicknames in wrestling? How about the best bodies in the sport (male and female)? Ten men who inspired Steve Austin's toughness? Chris Jericho's 10 favorite bands? We have all these and more!
- 52 **THE ROCK!**
NUMBER ONE ON THE JABRONI HIT LIST!
He might not realize how many enemies he has
- 56 **NOW THAT THE BLOODSUCKERS ARE GONE ...**
VAMPIRO IS DESTINED FOR WCW SUPERSTARDOM!
He's better off without an entourage
- 60 **DID THEY MAKE THE RIGHT MOVE?**
ANALYZING THE WRESTLERS WHO JUMPED PROMOTIONS
We've seen a lot of federation-hopping lately
- 64 **MIKE AWESOME vs. ROB VAN DAM!**
OUR PREVIEW & ANALYSIS OF THE ECW SUPERBOUT
RVD's fans have been waiting for this match!

Next issue on sale May 2, 2000

YOUR Letters



Chyna is the hottest lady in wrestling today, writes reader Chris Nellums. He loved the cover of our January 2000 issue, which prominently featured her.

CHYN-ESE NEW YEAR

THE WRESTLER sure picked the perfect subject to feature on the January 2000 cover. To ring in the new millennium with Chyna front and center was a great move. She is a beautiful, talented

wrestler who fights with men but remains very much a lady.

CHRIS NELLUMS
Pensacola, FL

WRONG PACKAGE

I can't believe what I just read

in the March 2000 issue of THE WRESTLER. Elizabeth made a new man out of The Total Package ("The Repacking Of Lex Luger: How Liz Made Him A New Man!"). Bull! Liz couldn't make Jello! The day The Total Package has no confidence in himself is the day hell freezes over.

JANE POLSTON
Waco, TX

PREPARE FOR WAR

Sabu has finally left Fonzie and Rob Van Dam behind. I can't wait to see Sabu destroy them both.

BILL RAVENNA
Wilber W@aol.com

TAZZ' MISSION

I don't understand why wrestling fans think Tazz won't succeed in the WWF. Didn't they see his matches in ECW? Don't they know how dangerous he is?

Tazz will prove his doubters wrong and dominate any wrestler the WWF puts before him. He will definitely wear the World title belt somewhere down the line. He is too good not to do that.

RICH ELSIE
Stanton, KY

SOAP OPERA ALERT

Why do Buff Bagwell, "Diamond" Dallas Page, and Kimberly Page feel the need to air their dirty laundry in a public forum like WCW?

Watching these three bicker among themselves reminds me of *The Jerry Springer Show* or some other horrible afternoon talk show.

If the Pages' marriage is in trouble, perhaps they should talk

to a marriage counselor behind closed doors, not "Mean" Gene Okerlund on *Nitro*.

JOE FRANNIE
La Grange, WY

APOLOGY NECESSARY?

I think THE WRESTLER wronged Gillberg in the March 2000 issue by making fun of his ring entrance ("1999: The Year In Pictures"). Just because he doesn't have the pyro of Sabu or Goldberg doesn't mean his entrance is not impressive. With his mean sneer, his bulging biceps, and his shaved head, Gillberg is one intimidating specimen, and the sparklers just add to his aura. Yeah, right.

TRISHA SOME
Konkapot, MA

SELLOUT SOLDIERS

Ron and Don Harris are sell-outs. First they came to WCW as the henchmen of the Powers-

That-Be. Then they were booted from the inner circle after the Powers-That-Be helped re-form the New World Order. Now, after taking months of abuse, Ron and Don Harris have once again donned suits and become the lackeys of the New World Order.

These guys are not the corporate type. I read on the very pages of this magazine how the Harrises swore to get back to their biker roots as soon as possible. I guess they are not bikers at heart! When will these guys strike out on their own and do something for themselves?!

CLIFF TAFT
Woonsocket, RI

MANIPULATING MAESTRO

After attending a live WWF event recently, I was dumbfounded by The Rock's ability to hold the attention of the crowd. After the main event, The Rock "per-

formed" on the microphone for nearly 20 minutes, captivating the crowd the whole time. It was unbelievable how the people reacted to his every word.

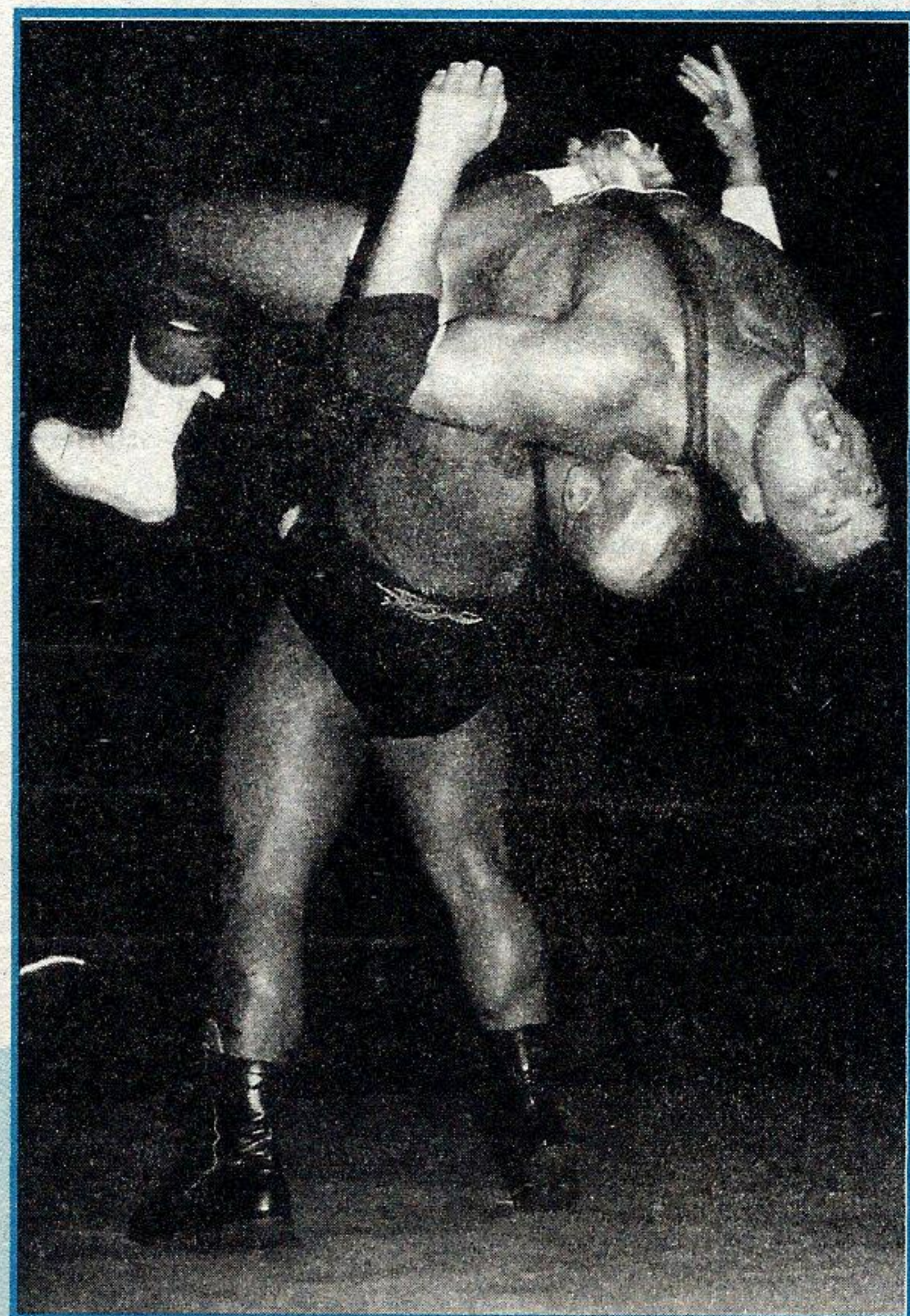
I know WCW has a wrestler called The Maestro, but after attending this card, I think The Rock is wrestling's real maestro. He played the fans like a tune.

CHAD BEARN
Turloc, CA

LONG TIME COMING

I'm glad Jerry Lynn stuck up for himself after Little Guido and Sal E. Graziano injured his foot. Jerry has always been one of my favorite wres-

(Continued on page 68)



With a strong showing against Kurt Angle, Tazz has shown that he belongs in the WWF. Reader Rich Elsie says Tazz will silence those who doubt his ability.

Wrestler

STANLEY WESTON
Founder

PUBLISHER.....Stuart M. Saks
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF.....David Lenker
MANAGING EDITOR.....Brandi Mankiewicz
ASSOCIATE EDITORS.....Frank Krewda
Will Welsh
SENIOR ART DIRECTOR.....Wendy Vetter
SENIOR ARTIST.....Tracy Fedorowicz
ART DIRECTORS.....Joseph Kalman
Todd Coleman
Teresa Landis
PRODUCTION MANAGER.....Mark P. Gebler
PRE-PRESS DIRECTOR.....Cliff Campo
PHOTO EDITOR.....Frank Vitucci
SENIOR WRITERS.....David Rosenbaum
Harry Burkett
Dan Murphy
Bryan Ethier
CONTRIBUTING WRITERS.....Matt Brock
Elizabeth A. Hunter
Mitch Lucas
Kristian Pope
PHOTO ASSISTANT.....Stephen Drew

Executive Vice President
Kenneth J. Gudaitis

Circulation Director
David Tyler

National Circulation Managers
Robert Nucci
Rose Ann Adolfi

Advertising Director
Sharon Liggio
(215) 643-6385

Subscription Inquiries
London Publishing Co.
P.O. Box 2029, Dept. 9
Marion, OH 43306-8121
(740) 375-2335

COVER PHOTO:
The Rock by Frank Vitucci

COVER DESIGN:
Teresa Landis

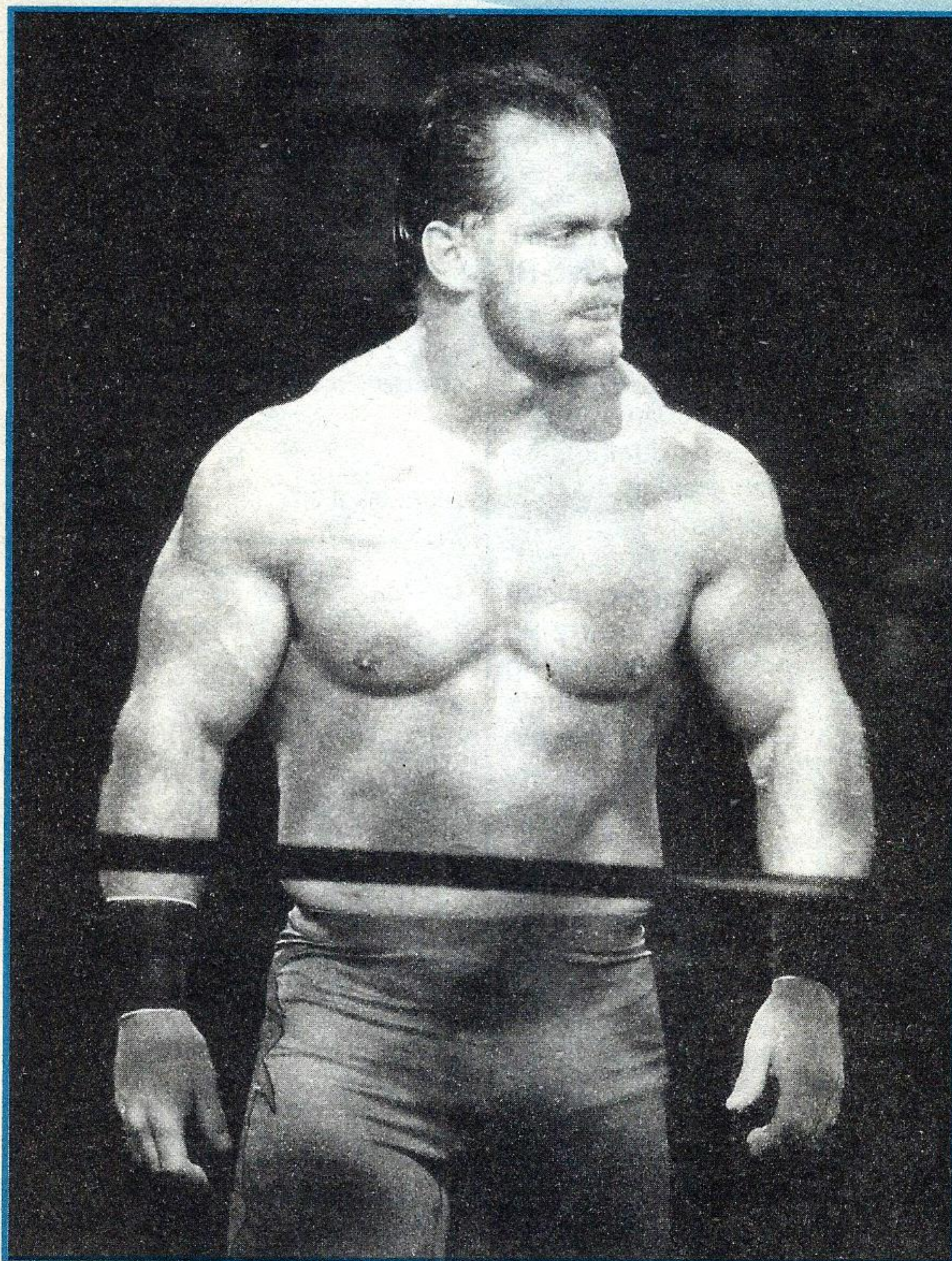
THE WRESTLER (ISSN: 1052-0899), Vol. 34, Number 6, is published monthly, with an additional issue in December, by London Publishing Co., 7002 W. Butler Pike, Ambler, PA 19002. Periodicals postage paid at Ambler, PA 19002 and additional post offices. Postmaster: Send change of address notices to: THE WRESTLER, P.O. Box 2029, Dept. 9, Marion, OH 43306-8121. Single copy price \$3.50 (\$5.25 in Canada, £2.65 in U.K.). Subscription price \$29.20 for 13 issues in the U.S., \$39.60 in remaining countries. Not responsible for the loss or non-return of unsolicited articles or photographs, which will not be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed envelope bearing the proper amount of postage. The entire contents of this magazine are copyright ©2000 London Publishing Co. No part of this magazine may be reproduced without the written permission of the publisher. All rights reserved. FOR ADVERTISING INQUIRIES AND RATES: (215) 643-6385. U.S. and Canadian distribution by Kable News Inc., 641 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10022. International distribution by Worldwide Media Service Inc., 115 East 23rd St., New York, NY 10010, U.K. distribution by Comag, Tavistock Rd., West Drayton, Middlesex UB77QE, England.

Printed in U.S.A.

WHAT'S

Happening

By Dan Murphy



In a shocking development, Chris Benoit's last match in WCW saw him win the WCW World title. Because of backstage politics, Benoit, along with Perry Saturn, Dean Malenko, and Eddy Guerrero, decided to leave WCW for the WWF.

WHAT A DIFFERENCE two weeks can make. On January 16 at WCW's Souled Out pay-per-view, **Chris Benoit** made **Sid Vicious** tap out to the Crippler crossface, thereby

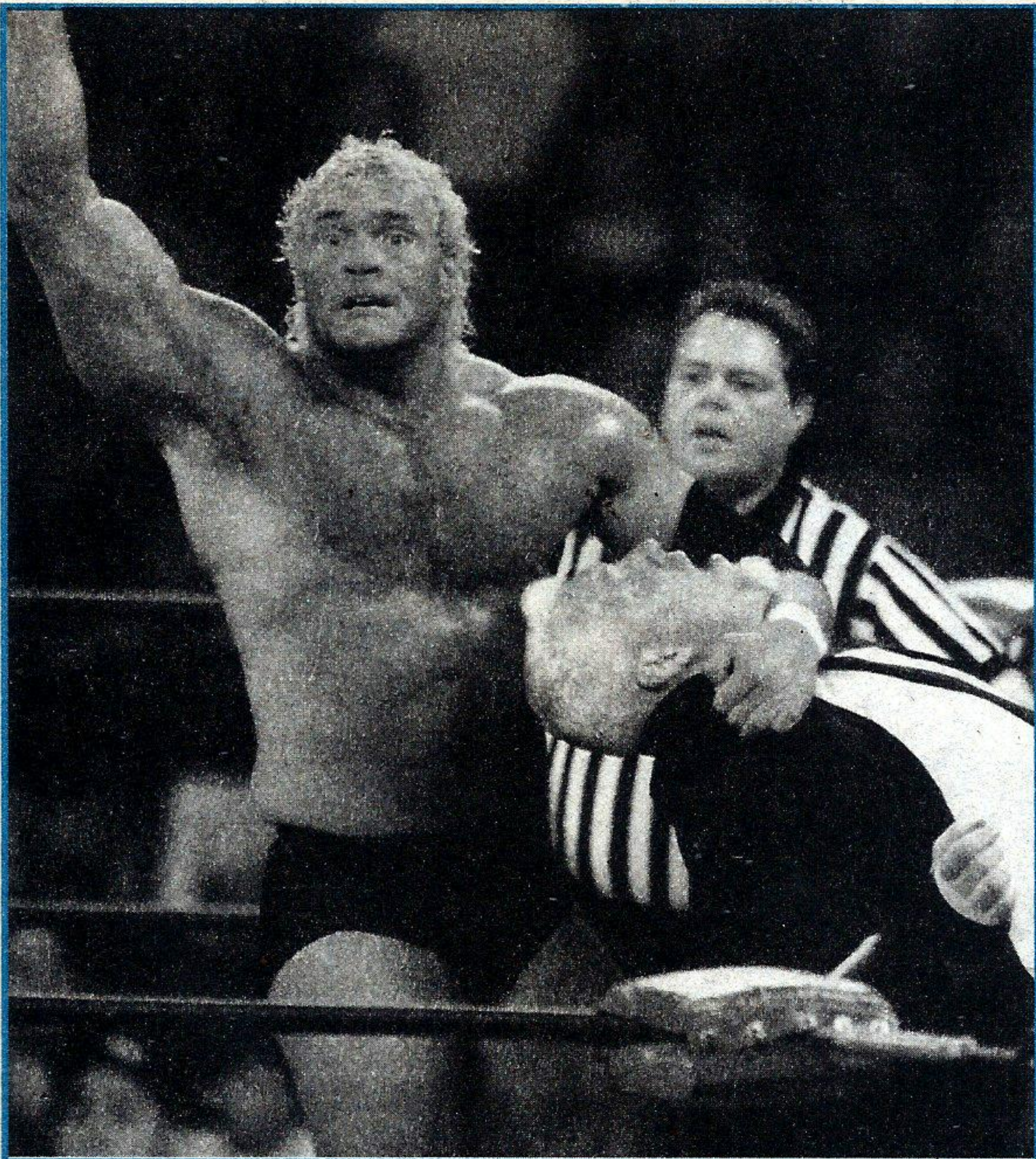
winning the vacant WCW World title. By January 31, Benoit had been stripped of the title and, along with fellow **Radicals Perry Saturn, Dean Malenko, and Eddy Guerrero**, had jumped to the WWF.

After I did my best to investigate all the rumors that had surfaced during the 15 days between Souled Out and the monumental *Raw* at which the four debuted, a few facts became clear. The Radicals, as **Jim Ross** dubbed the WCW foursome, were among a group of WCW wrestlers upset with **Vince Russo's** removal as creative head of the company and **Kevin Sullivan's** subsequent ascension to a more important position on the creative team. All four wrestlers reportedly asked for their releases from WCW during a meeting with WCW Executive Vice President **Bill Busch**, and Busch, who said he would grant releases to any disgruntled wrestlers upon his appointment, made good on his word by releasing the foursome outright, enabling them to sign with any promotion. The night they showed up at *Raw*, they were free agents and guests of the very congenial **Mick Foley**.

"Benoit, Saturn, Malenko, and Guerrero are four of the best wrestlers in the world," Foley said. "I thought having them in the WWF would be a real coup for the federation, and it has been. They've brought an energy and freshness to the locker room that hasn't been there since the days of **Dude Love**—and you know how that swingin' hipster lit up a room."

Of course, while WCW was in turmoil, Vicious capitalized on the situation by becoming only the eighth man to ever win both the WWF and WCW world titles.

"I can't concern myself with all the politics and who's not happy



Sid Vicious, the latest target of the NWO, has made life difficult for the rebellious faction. Even though it was basically the entire NWO against him, Vicious managed to upset Kevin Nash for the WCW World title on two occasions.

with what around here," Vicious said. "All I want to do is get in the ring against whoever they put in front of me and prove once again that Sid Vicious rules the world!"

Unfortunately for Vicious, the **New World Order** has other plans for "The Millennium Man."

"Sid is such a rock that he doesn't know what we have in store for him," **Jeff Jarrett** said. "His life is going to be an absolute disaster until one of three things happen: He gives up the fight for the belt, he joins us—which ain't going to happen, or we beat the snot out of him. We like the last option the best, of course."

It may be an unpopular opinion, but I like **The Big Show's** new look and attitude. Maybe losing (and not winning) the WWF World title was exactly what this behemoth needed to have happen to him. He is now

motivated to get the title back, and he hasn't been motivated by much in recent memory.

"You know what, I know what being the WWF champion is all about now, and I know the prestige that it brings," Show said. "So I know how important it is to hold that title, and, quite honestly, I'll do anything to get that feeling and that honor back, even if I have to ignore the fans and not be the hero they want me to be. Besides, it's not like they've done anything for me in the past."

Man, does this guy hop back and forth between fan favorite and rulebreaker a lot or what?

Rikishi Phatu is huge—hugely popular, that is. Since teaming with the club-hopping tandem of **Too Cool**, the former Fatu has heard nothing but the shrieks of fans who want to see him get his groove on,

and Phatú has done just that, both in the ring and out of it. **Michael Cole** says that the fans would be wise to not label him as *only* fun-loving, however.

"Rikishi is a dancing fool," Cole said when I caught up with him at a WWF show in Philadelphia, "but he's more than that. I mean, he almost won the WWF title. Not even I expected that! Just remember that Rikishi has feelings, too, and that they get hurt easy. I know the fans like him, but they need to remember not to pick on him or make light of him too much. Right now, he'll do anything for the fans, but I also remember days when he hated the fans. **The Headshrinkers** were not a pleasant team."

It's hard to believe that just a few short months ago, **Tommy Dreamer** was contemplating retirement. In recent weeks, Dreamer has beaten **Lance Storm**, **Yoshihiro Tajiri**, and teamed with **Dusty Rhodes** to beat **Steve Corino** and **Rhino**. However, there are some in the ECW locker room who feel he is making a huge mistake in trusting Rhodes.

"**Terry Funk** turned against Tommy and nearly broke his heart," **Nova** said. "What makes you think Terry's old pal Rhodes will be any different?"

In a related item, sources have confirmed **Raven** and **Francine** have become very close recently. Anyone remember the name **Beulah McGillicutty**?

Chris Candido and **Tammy Lynn Sytch** are making their mark in XPW. Candido pinned former XPW champion **Damien Steele** in his federation debut in January ... **Christopher Daniels** is the new All Pro Wrestling Internet champion. He beat **Michael Modest** for the title on January 22 ... **Mike Enos**, **Dan Severn**, and **Blacktop Bully** have carved out solid niches for themselves in WXO, the new promotion to which **Ted DiBiase** serves as CEO. That could all

(Continued on page 69)

NO HÖLDS Barred

with Will
Welsh

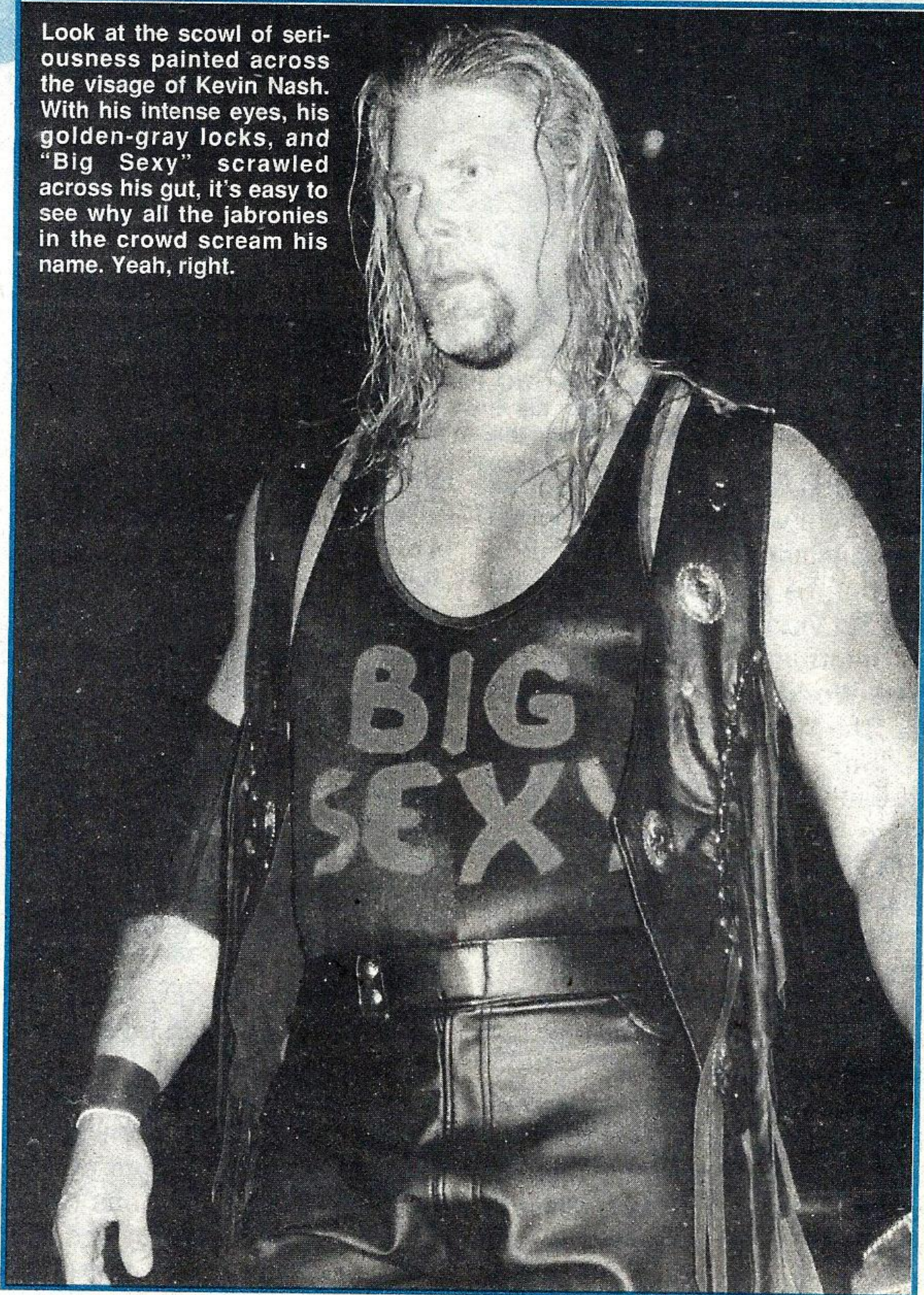
MAYBE I'M JUST stupid, but I finally noticed that the name of this column is "No Holds Barred." It should mean that, for this column, all the rules are thrown out the window. It should mean that after reading this column, you should feel chaotic and anarchistic—ready to challenge your parents, your significant other, and your government with a rebellious act of desperate corruption.

I'll admit it, what I've written since taking over this column three issues ago hasn't exactly inspired such emotion. So I've finally decided to go full bore. No more Roddy Piper/Buff Bagwell kid gloves for me. No sir. I'm prepared to shock everyone—including my fellow editors—with my commentary this month.

Professional wrestling reeks. It really does. I can't believe that I spend every Monday night watching grown men wrestle around in their underwear as the male jabronies in the crowd down beer and nachos while cheering on guys like "Big Sexy" Kevin Nash, The Total Package, Buff Bagwell, and other male wrestlers with names that advertise their glowing masculinity to an overwhelmingly male audience.

I can't believe that instead of watching *Ally McBeal*, that sultry
(Continued on page 72)

Look at the scowl of seriousness painted across the visage of Kevin Nash. With his intense eyes, his golden-gray locks, and "Big Sexy" scrawled across his gut, it's easy to see why all the jabronies in the crowd scream his name. Yeah, right.



By
Harry
Burkett

Inside the Ring

"HELLO?" I ASKED into the telephone. Silence. Since I had picked up the phone on the first ring, I thought I must have caught the person off-guard. Then I heard heavy breathing. An obscene phone call? On a Friday afternoon?

As I was about to hang up the phone on the dirty miscreant, a voice suddenly came booming over the receiver with all the resonance of a seasoned ring announcer. "Hel-lo. This is 'The Quintessential Studmuffin'. I'm calling because I heard Liz Hunter is a fine ..."

"Wait a minute! Joel Gertner, right?" I asked, fearful of where his introduction was going.

I heard a sigh of dissatisfaction. "How are you supposed to know who I am if you don't let me introduce myself?!" Gertner scolded.

"All right, all right, Joel," I laughed. "This isn't TNN. You can finish your sentence."

"No, I'm not in the mood," he replied. "But this TNN censorship deal is why I've called. I guess you've seen how those TNN execs and Cyrus have been ruining the ECW show."

"According to Cyrus, you're the one ruining the show," I shot back. "He says that your, well, provocative introductions are not only profane, but getting old with the fans. Maybe they think they can improve the show by keeping you contained."

"Or getting me fired!" Gertner fumed. "I'm calling members of the press to get my side of the story out. Are you interested in what I have to say?"

I confirmed that I was very interested. Gertner claimed he and Cyrus haven't been on good terms since Cyrus joined ECW. Cyrus had expected to receive the color commentator's job on TNN since he already had the position for ECW's pay-per-views. Paul Heyman, for whatever reason, decided Gertner was best for that slot, though. According to Gertner, Cyrus has been going over Heyman's head and contacting executives of The Nashville Network in an attempt to have Gertner removed from *ECW On TNN*.

"Worse yet, Cyrus has been kissing up to those executives night and day," Gertner said.

"Did you hear Cyrus and (TNN President) David Hall spent a whole afternoon at Dollywood? The other week, when we were in Nashville, Cyrus went down to the Grand Ole Opry and showed clips of my commentary to Porter Wagoner, then gave him a demonstration on how he would do the show. I hear Cyrus has recommendations from Porter Wagoner, Grandpa Jones, and the guy who sells cotton candy at Dollywood! He's trying to one-up me, Harry, and I'm not going to let him get away with it!"

I suggested Gertner have a serious chat with Heyman. Surely he would be savvy enough to see through Cyrus' charade.

"Paul E. sneers at me and says he doesn't have time to deal with it," said Gertner. "That guy's doing nothing but drinking Jolt cola and

eating coffee grounds just to keep up with all the TV shows, pay-per-views, and house shows this promotion is sprouting all of a sudden. He just tells me to go away. Meanwhile, if Hall or someone else from TNN passes a memo to Paul E., he'll get rid of me just because he doesn't have the time or energy to fight them."

By this time, I was feeling sympathy for Gertner. Considering the poor taste he usually espouses on TNN, it is always difficult for me to feel sorry for him.

But here, on the phone, was a man desperate to save his livelihood. I asked Gertner if he had tried dealing with Cyrus man-to-man.

"Cyrus told me to visit the front office last week," he said, "but I didn't know where the hell it was. So Cyrus tells me that the front office is basically set up in any town we're traveling in. I went to the address and it was the locker room of a YMCA. And you know what kind of people hang around in there ..."

I replied that I did not. "Anyway, Cyrus said his number-one goal in ECW was to eliminate me and replace me with a more suitable host ... and we both know who that would be. I've got to run, though, man. I'm calling *Inside Edition*. They've got one hot babe of a producer there. Maybe she can help me."

I wished Joel the best of luck. Considering Cyrus' determination to terminate him, he's going to need it. □



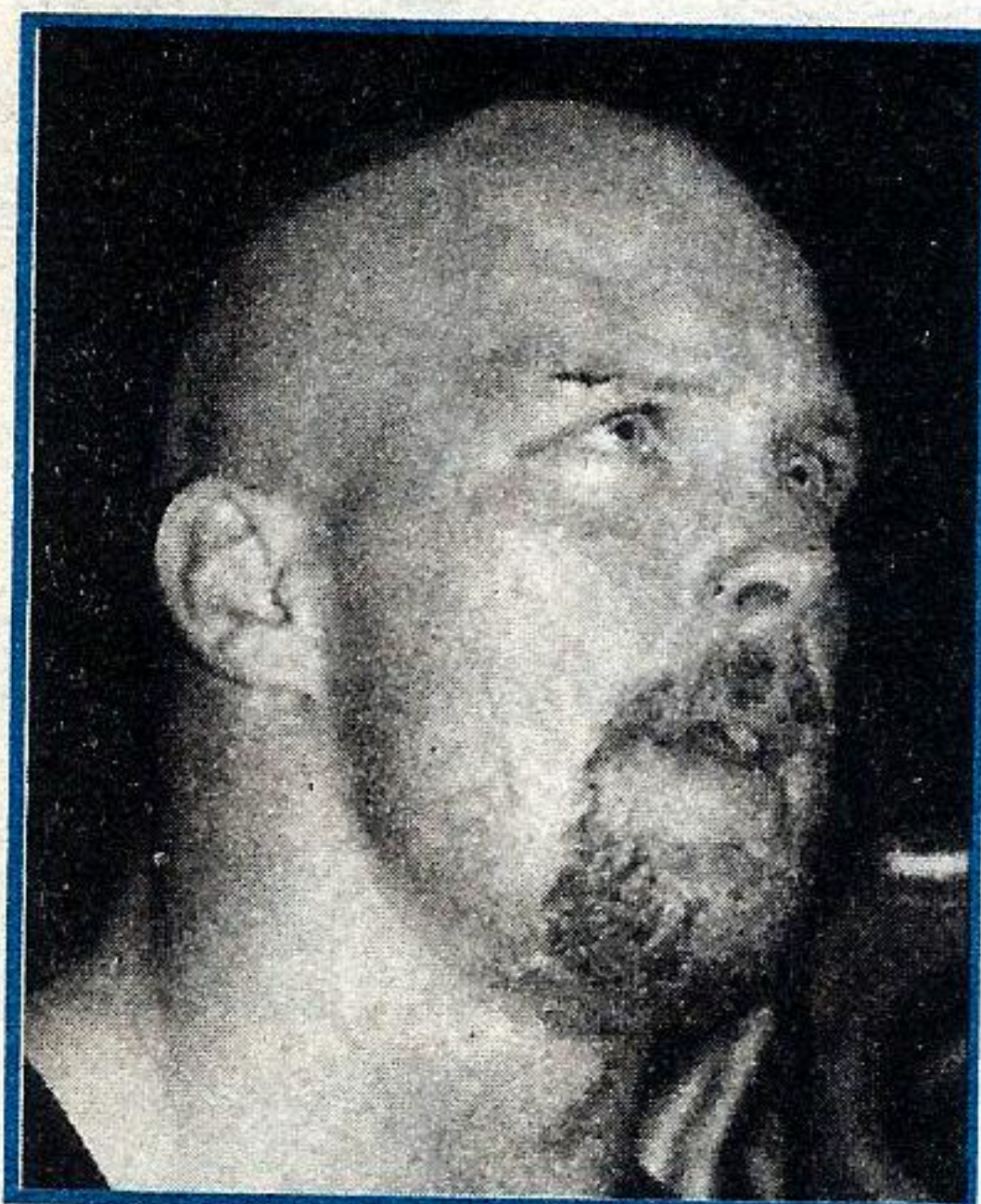
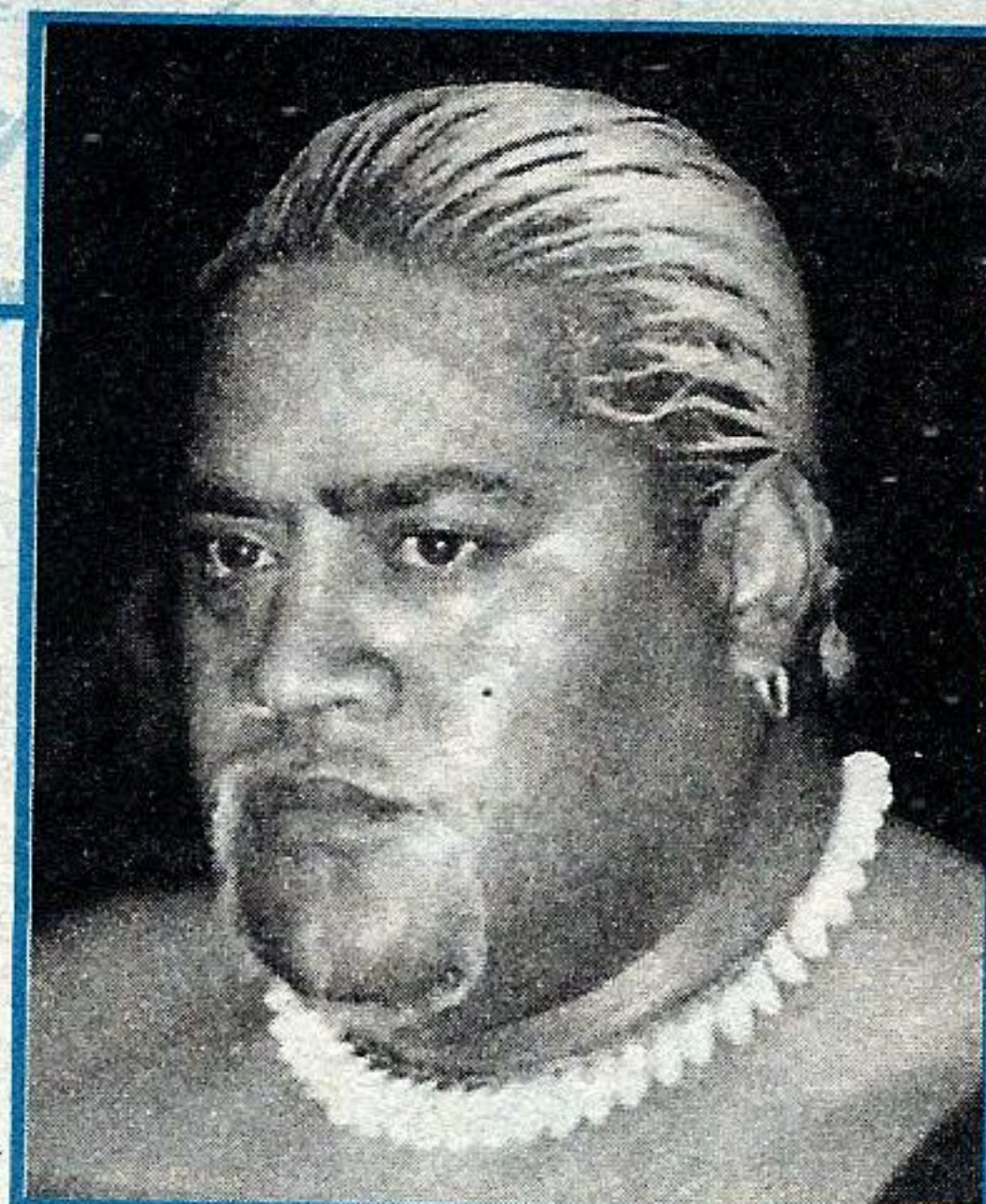
Gertner: irate stud!

THUMB UP



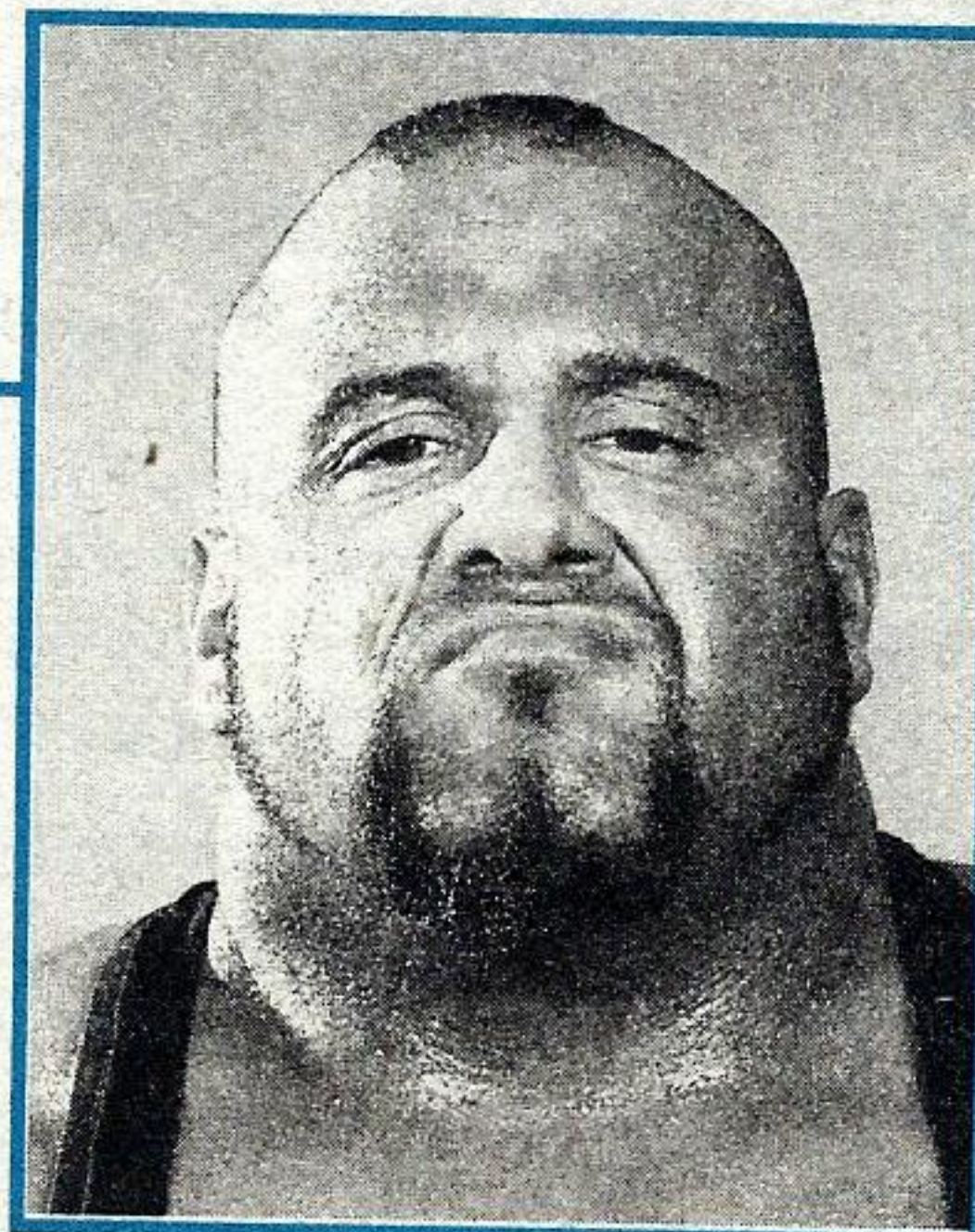
Thumbs Up to Sid Vicious. An arrogant Kevin Nash stepped into the ring at *Nitro* on January 24 so confident about winning the vacant WCW World heavyweight title that he sent the rest of the NWO to Las Vegas to get the party started. But Sid Vicious spoiled the party by beating Nash for the WCW World heavyweight championship. The next night, Nash stripped Vicious on a technicality and ordered a rematch—which Sid also won. At press time, we didn't know what Nash was planning to do next to steal the belt from Vicious (and we were pretty sure he'd do something), but whatever happens takes nothing away from Sid's two impressive victories.

Thumbs Up to Rikishi Phatu. The Samoan formerly known simply as Fatu continues to make a huge impact, and he pushed his WWF career another step forward when he emerged as the only wrestler willing to team with The Rock against Triple-H and Big Show at *Raw* on January 24. Rikishi saw an opportunity and grabbed it, even though the rest of the WWF's "jabronis" had no desire to team with the man who insulted them. Two days later at *Smackdown*, Rikishi got a singles shot against The Rock and might have beaten him cleanly had Big Show and Triple-H not interfered. The new Rikishi Phatu certainly won't be left behind.

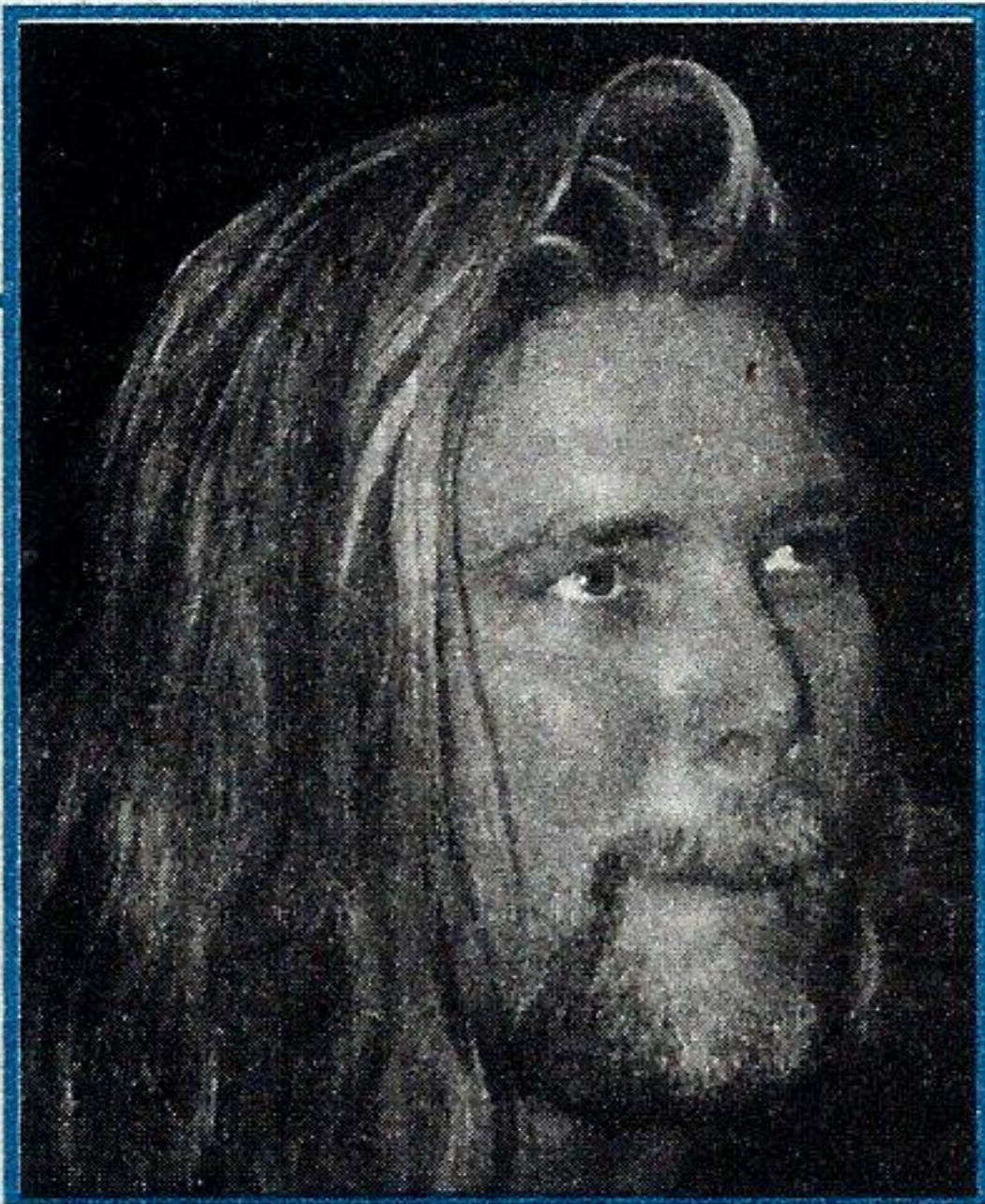


Thumbs Up to Steve Austin. He might not be ready to wrestle—in fact, there's still a chance he might never wrestle again—but "Stone-Cold's" appearance on the USA Network's *Halftime Heat* during halftime of the Super Bowl was certainly welcome news for his millions of fans, as well as WWF matchmakers, who must see a strengthened talent roster in the federation's future. Austin is itching to get back in the ring, but even if he can't, he can get by in the federation on his personality alone (as he proved on *Halftime Heat*). Perhaps the only good part about Austin's absence was that it allowed several other WWF stars to elevate themselves.

Thumbs Up to Tazz. ECW fans have known for a long time what WWF fans are just now finding out: Tazz—formerly with one less "z" in his name—is a pretty spectacular competitor. The former ECW World champion made an impressive debut in the WWF, ending Kurt Angle's winning streak by using a series of suplexes and his *katahajimi* to choke out Angle. Tazz has always been a no-nonsense wrestler, and maybe some of his fans were worried that he'd have to add a little nonsense to his style in the WWF. Well, worry no longer, because even the WWF's powers must realize that all Tazz has to do is wrestle.

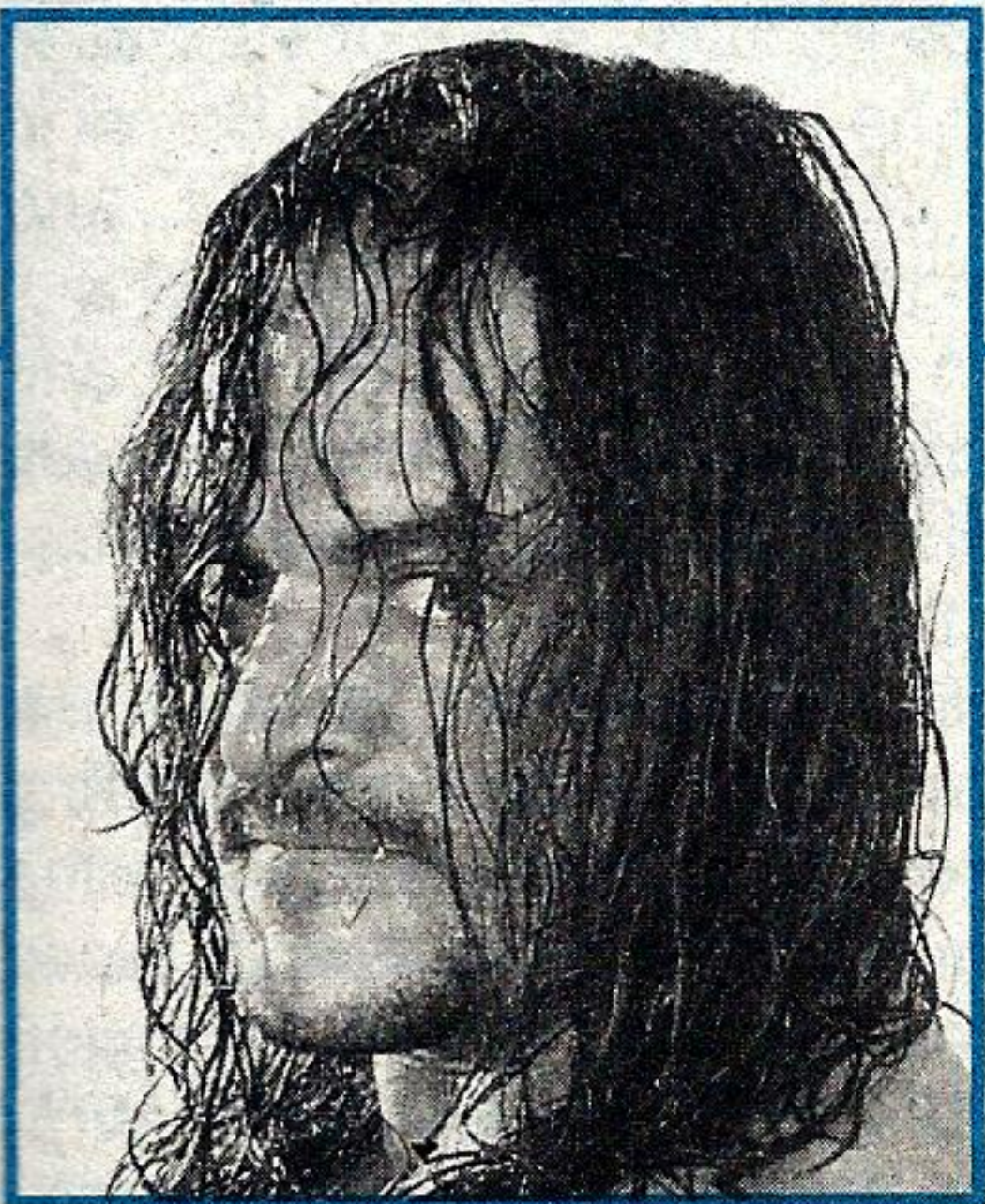


THUMBSDOWN



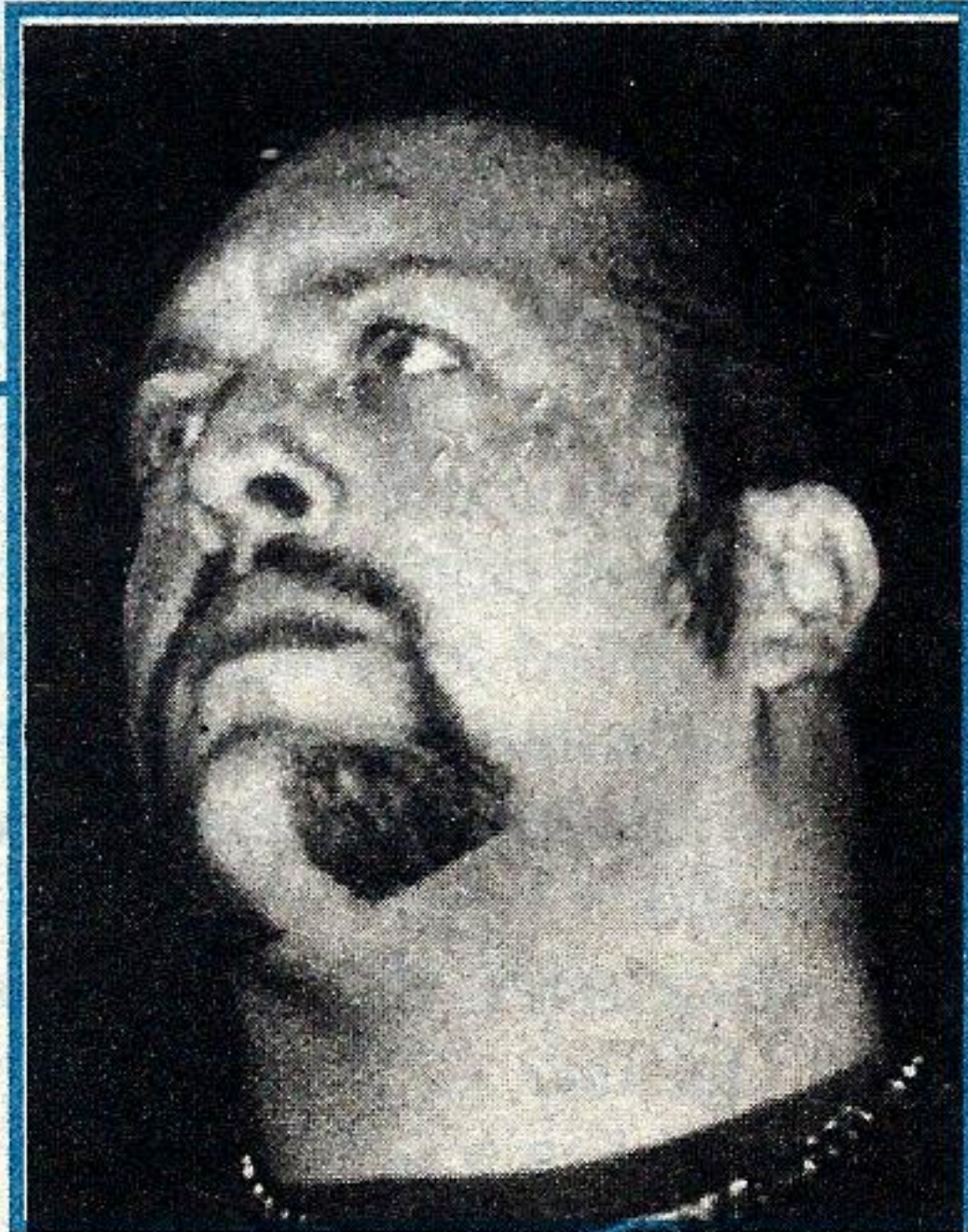
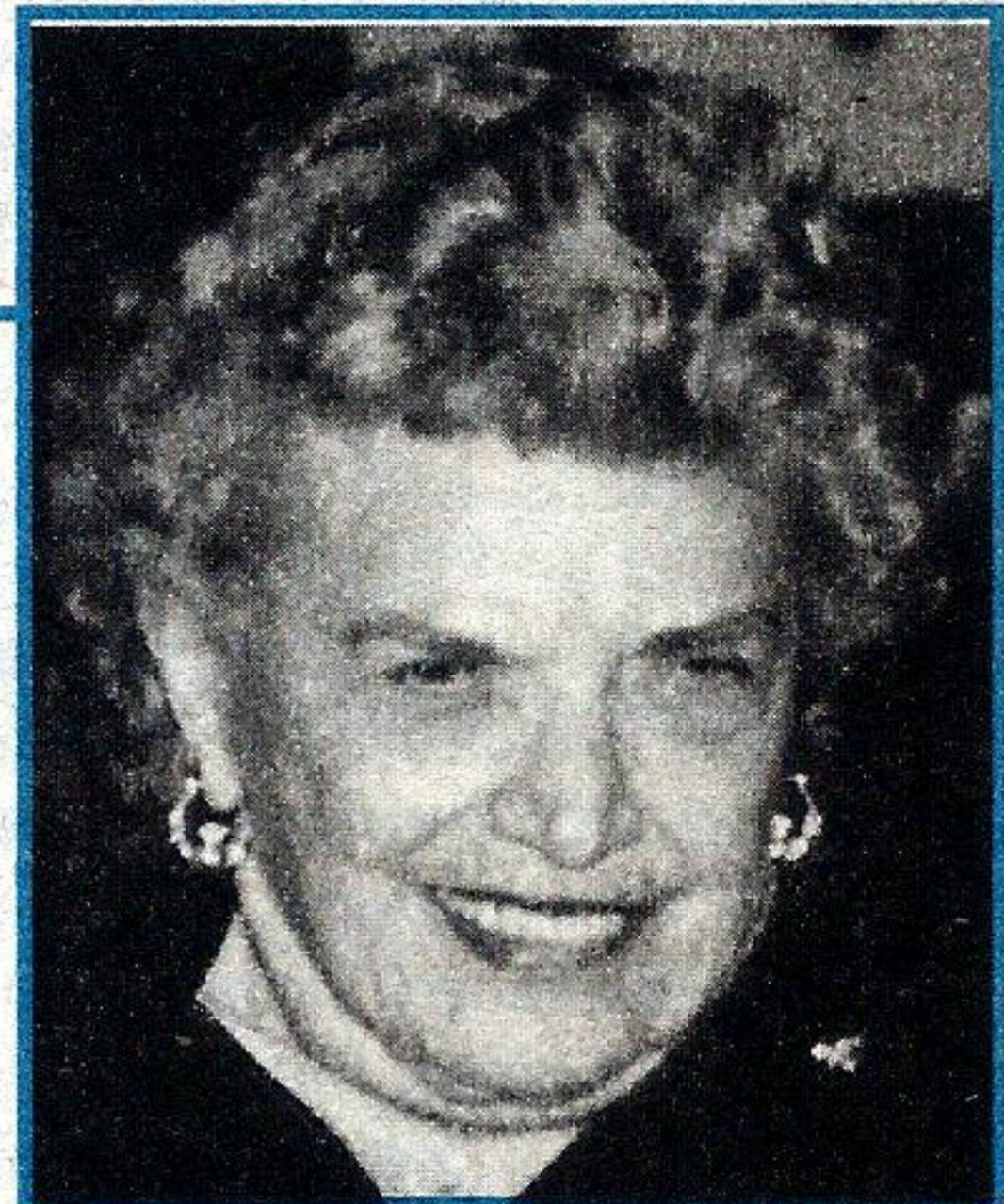
Thumbs Down to Kevin Nash. If we're going to give a "Thumbs Up" to Sid Vicious, we have to give a "Thumbs Down" to WCW Commissioner/former WCW World champion Kevin Nash, who is basically making a mockery not only of the federation, but of the proud history of the WCW World heavyweight title. Those who have followed wrestling over the past few years know that the world titles have become less meaningful because they change hands so often. Still, guys like Harley Race and Lou Thesz—and even Ric Flair—have to be shedding a few tears right now because of what Nash has done to the integrity of WCW's most important championship.

Thumbs Down to Mae Young. C'mon, woman, don't you realize that you're embarrassing yourself? Oh, sure, we were the first to laugh at the Royal Rumble when Mae Young won the bikini contest, and the joke still hadn't worn totally thin the following night, when Young again threatened to show her "puppies," but we certainly weren't laughing with Mae ... we were laughing at her. Let's face it, the woman is well over 70 years old. She can barely make it to the ring without hanging on to Fabulous Moolah or Mark Henry. She is doing nothing but making a fool of herself.



Thumbs Down to Sabu. He has always been his own man, so Sabu must have temporarily lost his mind when he hit the ring and attacked Rob Van Dam before Van Dam's scheduled match against ECW World champion Mike Awesome at the ECW Arena could get started. Sabu ruined what could have been a Match of the Year candidate just because he was mad that Van Dam had beaten him at Guilty as Charged a week earlier. We're not sure what Awesome or Sabu have to gain by this new alliance, especially since Sabu should be wrestling Awesome, not teaming with him. Then again, like we said, maybe Sabu temporarily lost his mind.

Thumbs Down to The Big Show. Is he a fan favorite? Is he a rulebreaker? Is he, like so many wrestlers these days, none of the above? Does he want to be WWF World heavyweight champion? Or is he merely satisfied with doing Triple-H's dirty work? It's time for Show to decide what he wants to be. Our suggestion: his own man. A man who does what he wants to do and sets his own goals. Whether that's as a fan favorite or a rulebreaker really doesn't matter, but the way things are going these days, he's wasting his talent and his time. Big Show, it's time for you to make your move.



CORRESPONDENTS

Reports

Cincinnati, OH (Correspondent—Dutch Krewda): Chris Benoit finally won a world heavyweight title, but found himself champion for only a day. Benoit defeated Sid Vicious to win the vacant WCW World title at Souled Out (his last bout in WCW), but Arn Anderson, referee for the Benoit-Sid match, insisted that Benoit be stripped the following night.

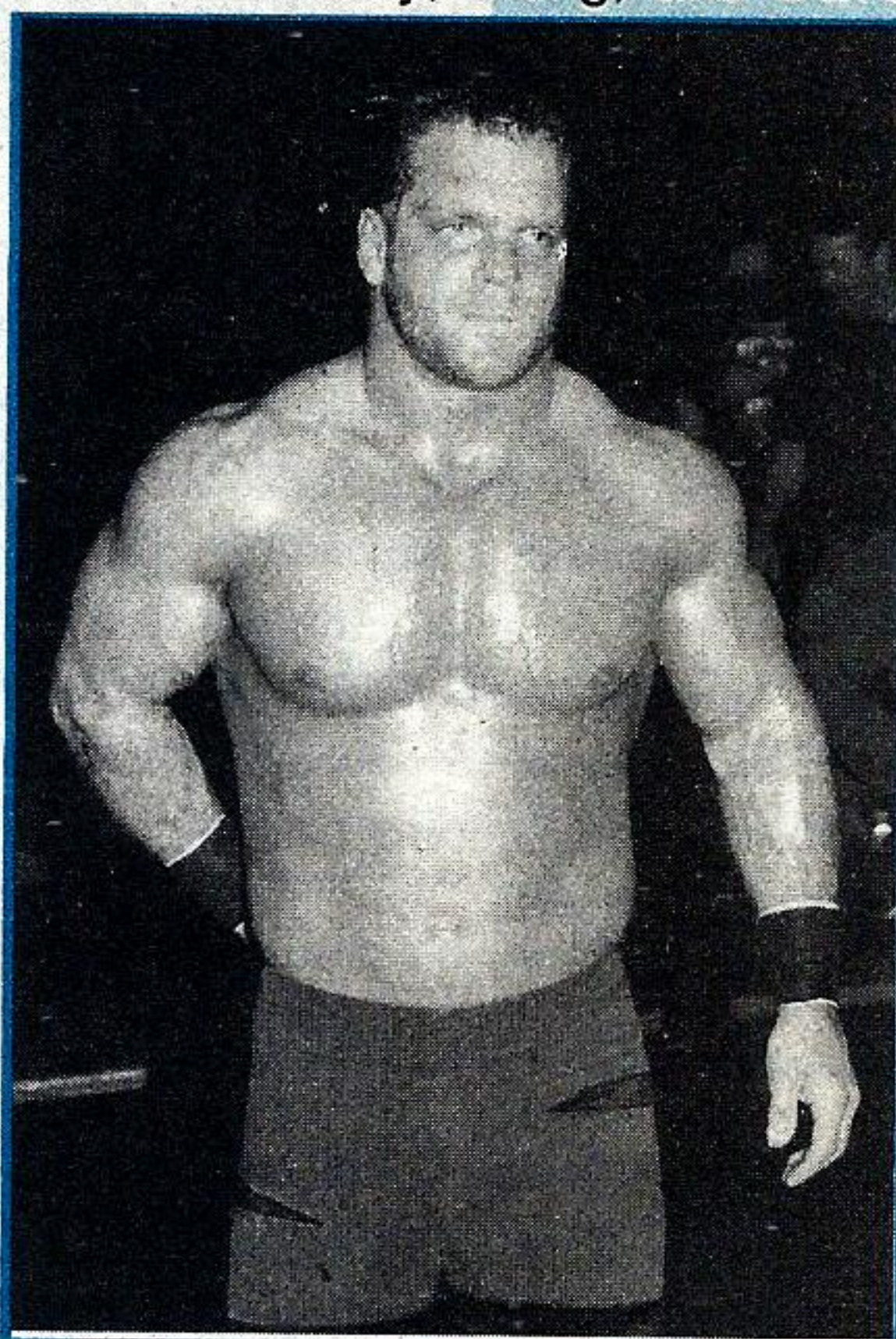
Benoit dominated the match, nailing Vicious with hard chops before directing his attention to Sid's knee. The fans tried to cheer Sid on, but Benoit was so focused that he didn't even hear their cheers for his opponent.

Benoit weakened Vicious with a variety of suplexes, then took him to the mat with a heel hook submission hold, but he could not get Vicious to tap out. With Vicious down, Benoit launched his diving headbutt and covered Vicious, but he only got a two-count.

Although Vicious was groggy, he vainly mounted a comeback. Sid surprised Benoit with a choke-slam, but his pin attempt was stopped when referee Anderson saw that Benoit's foot was under the ropes. Benoit proceeded to place Vicious in the Crippler crossface. Vicious tapped out, but his foot was under the bottom rope while he was doing so. Anderson didn't see this at the time he called for the end of the bout, but when he saw a replay later, he decided that Benoit's win was invalid.

In other bouts: Billy Kidman beat Dean Malenko ... Vampiro defeated David Flair & Crowbar in a

handicap match ... Big Vito & Johnny the Bull beat Don & Ron Harris ... Oklahoma defeated WCW cruiserweight champ Madusa to win the title ... WCW hardcore champ Brian Knobs beat Norman Smiley, Meng, and Dave



Chris Benoit made his last WCW match memorable, as he beat Sid Vicious with a Crippler crossface to claim the World title. One night later, he was stripped of the title.

"Fit" Finlay in a four-way match ... Booker T beat Stevie Ray by disqualification ... Tank Abbott defeated Jerry Flynn by knockout in a shootfight rules match ... Buff Bagwell beat Dallas Page in a "Last Man Standing" match ... The Wall beat Billy Kidman in a cage match ... Kevin Nash defeated Terry Funk.

Freeland, PA (Correspondent—Timothy A. Walker): Int'l Pro Wrestling heavyweight champ

Tom Brandi defended his title against King Kong Bundy in the main event of this card at the YMCA. Brandi surprised the fans when he allowed Harvey Wippleman to manage him. As a result of this decision, the fans were solidly behind Bundy during the bout.

Brandi began the match by attacking Bundy from behind, nailing him with his title belt. With Bundy hurt, Wippleman took the opportunity to climb into the ring and kick him several times. Brandi and Wippleman then whipped Bundy across the ring, but Bundy came back at them and caught both with a double-clothesline.

Bundy had control of the match until he tried to avalanche Brandi in the corner. Brandi moved, and Bundy crashed to the mat. Brandi then grabbed his Italian flag and wrapped it around Bundy's throat, choking him while Wippleman distracted the ref.

It looked bad for Bundy when Wippleman climbed onto the ring apron and held Bundy's arms behind his back as Brandi raced across the ring. Bundy, however, pulled himself away from Wippleman's grip and moved out of Brandi's way, causing Brandi to collide with Wippleman. He followed that up with a big splash off the ropes, got the pin, and was declared the new IPW champ.

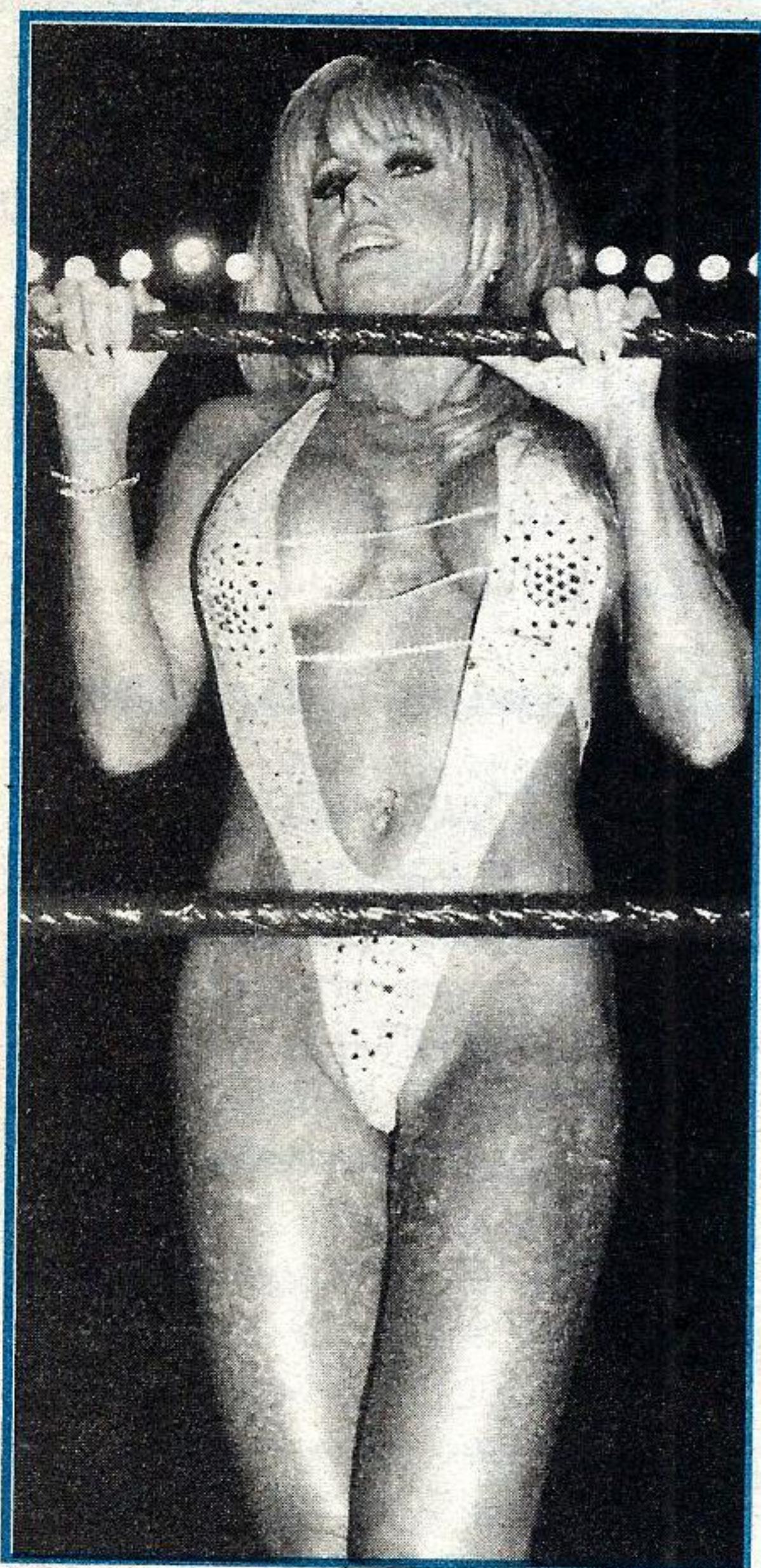
In other bouts: The Patriot pinned Julio Fantastico ... Mike Quackenbush & Johnny Graham defeated Rob Noxious & George Anthony ... Doink the Clown beat

(continued on page 76)

YOU Asked Us

Q: "I have a question for Matt and Jeff Hardy: Hey, guys, it seems like your careers really took off after Terri became your manager. Is she really that effective? How much credit does she deserve for your success?"—Ryan Bassett, Newark, DE

A: "Terri is every bit as helpful



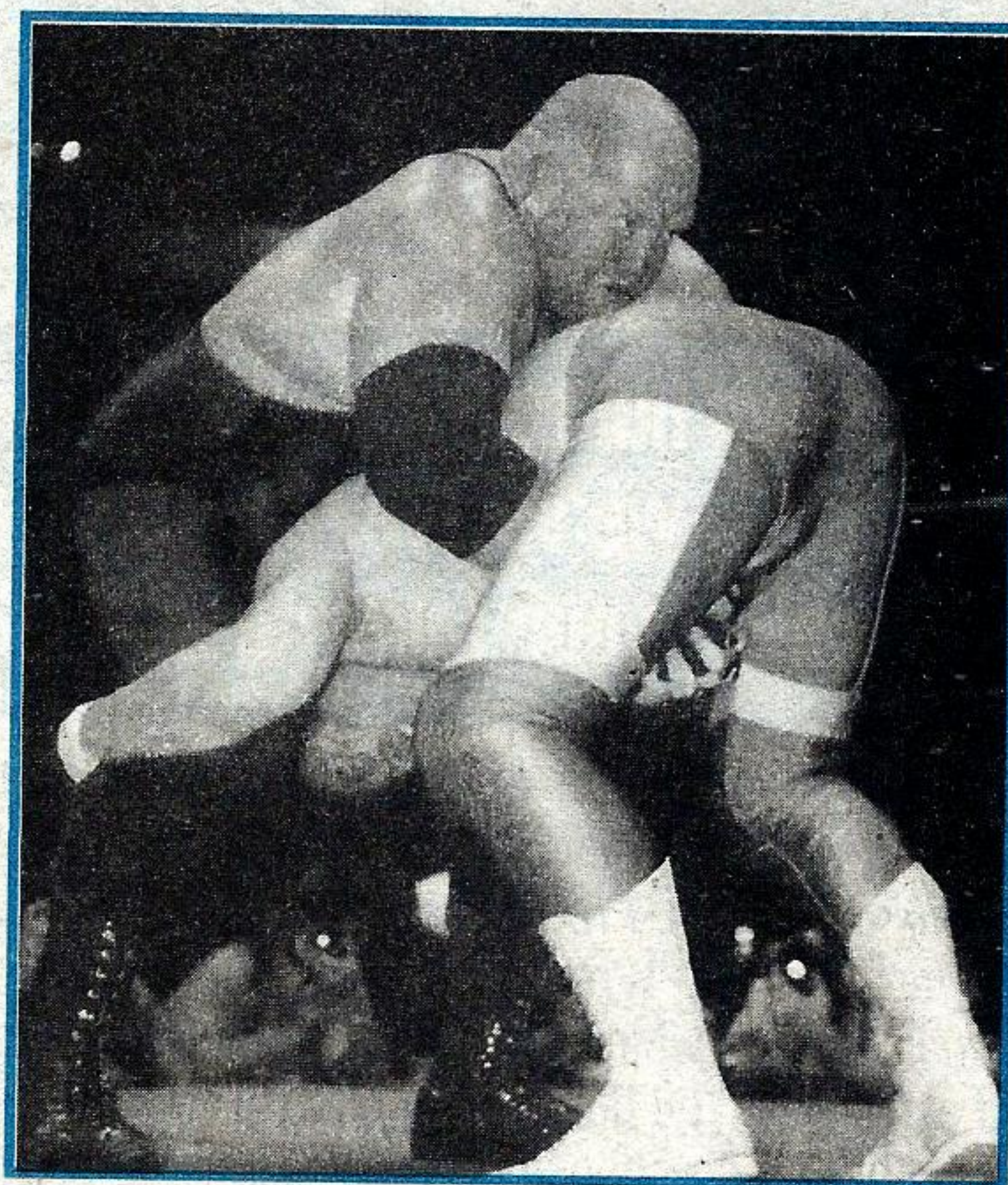
Terri sure is beautiful, but Matt Hardy asserts that she's more than a pretty face. The Hardy Boyz credit Terri for much of their success.

as she appears to be," said Matt. "Jeff and I would probably still be opening up *Sunday Night Heat* if it wasn't for her. You know, a lot of people think of cleavage and teased hair when they see Terri, but she has a very sharp wrestling mind. She's been around this business for a long time, and she's learned a lot over the years. Right now, Jeff and I are getting the benefit of her experience.

What really impresses me the most about Terri, though, is her loyalty. She's stuck by Jeff and I through some very difficult times, always giving advice and support when we needed it. Hell, she's even gone through tables for us. So, yeah, Terri deserves a lot of credit for our success. That's why Jeff and I consider her an equal part of the team."

...

Q: "I would like to ask Vader something: Vader, you had a tremendous year wrestling in Japan, yet you were overlooked by the Japanese media when it came to the voting for the 1999 Pro



Despite having a successful year wrestling for All-Japan, Vader was snubbed by the Japanese media when it came time to vote for 1999's Pro Wrestling MVP.

Wrestling MVP. Do you feel slighted?"—Josh Mistalsko, Buffalo, NY

A: "I don't get too excited about awards," Vader replied. "I have a very blase attitude when it comes to stuff like that. In Japan, they take those awards very seriously—it's like the Oscars are in the States. I certainly did have a good year, didn't I? Two Triple Crowns, a singles tournament championship. I mean, I know why I didn't win it, but that's okay. That award belongs to the

(Continued on page 77)

Introducing

By Will Welsh

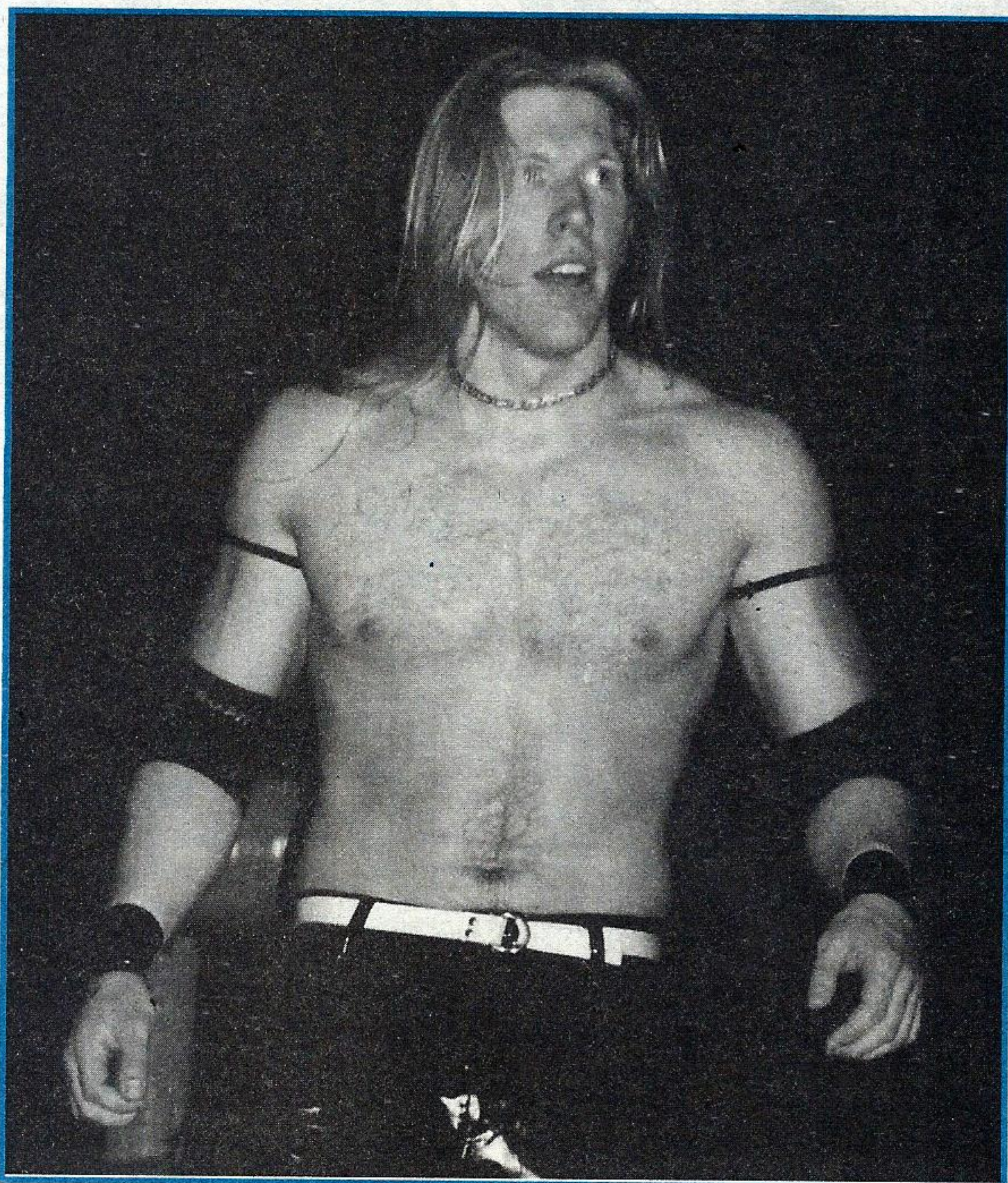
VINCE GOODNITE

SOMETIMES IN LIFE, there are people, who through the pursuit and achievement of their dreams, give others hope that one day they, too, can achieve their own dreams. Vince Goodnite is one such person.

Born and raised in Lincoln, Nebraska, Goodnite dreamed of becoming a professional wrestler from the moment he first laid eyes on the behemoths of the squared circle. The imagery, the spectacle, and the one-on-one competition captured his imagination, and although most young men in Nebraska—and especially those in Lincoln, Nebraska—dream of becoming star football players for the University of Nebraska, Goodnite's dream of finding fame and fortune under the bright lights of a wrestling arena never faded.

Making the transition from dreamer to achiever wasn't exactly an easy one, however. First, Goodnite had to find a wrestling school to take him in, and after sending out applications to 16 of the best wrestling schools in the country, Goodnite eventually settled on the Wild Samoan Training Center in Allentown, Pennsylvania—a school that is about 2,000 miles away from the front porch where he spent many a night under the stars imagining his life as a WWF superstar.

"This is something that I've wanted to do my entire life," the 6'4", 220-pound Goodnite remarked while signing autographs for a throng of screaming girls at a recent East Coast Wrestling Association card in Delaware. "I was always



Let's face it: A lot of young men dream about becoming professional wrestlers. Not many will do whatever it takes to realize that dream. For Vince Goodnite, there are no sacrifices too great to get to where he feels destiny is leading him

attracted to the atmosphere of wrestling cards, of being a wrestler. Now that I've put all my marbles in one bag, I don't plan on disappointing myself or my family."

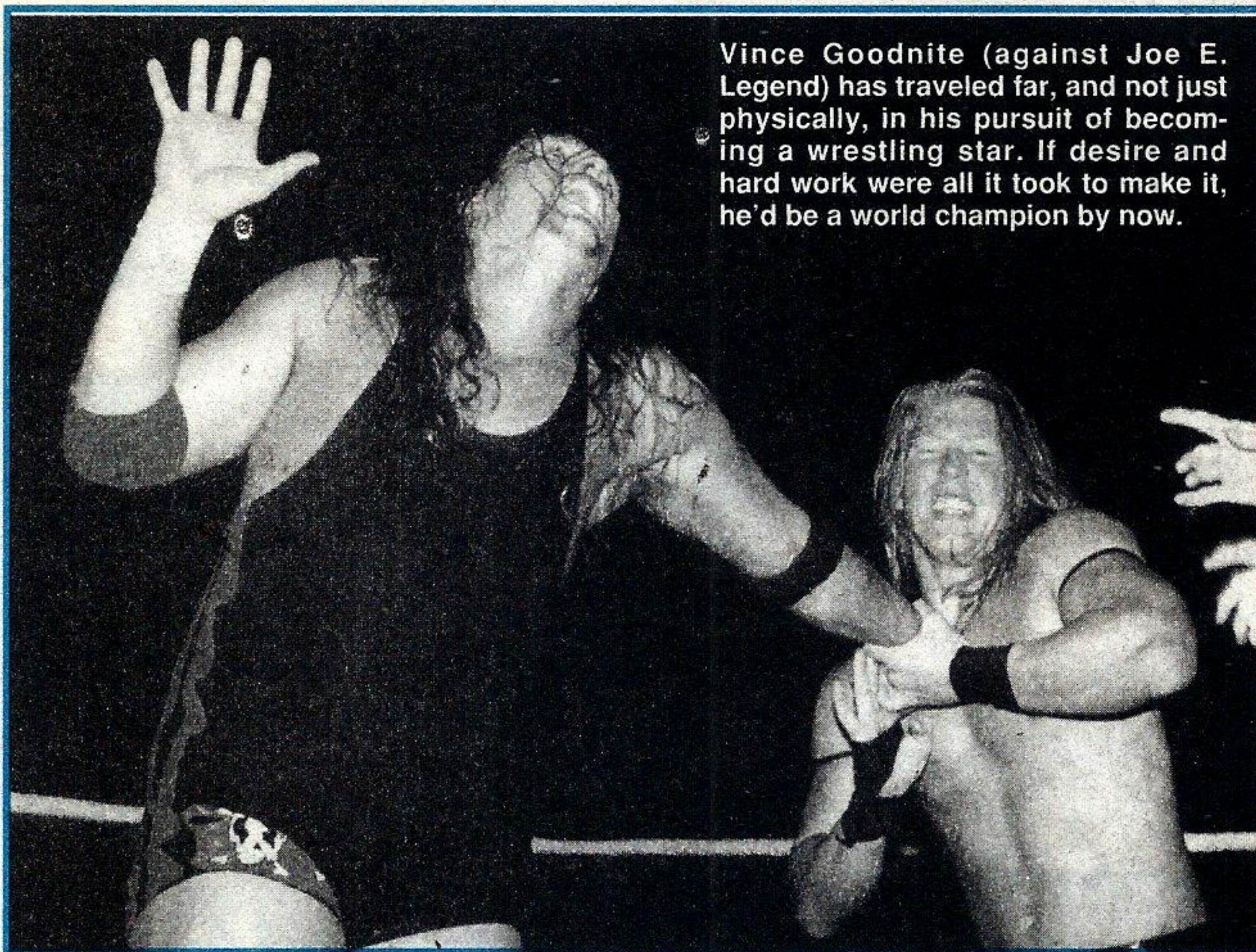
If Goodnite keeps wrestling the way he is wrestling right now, the word "disappointment" won't ever enter his vocabulary. He's been taught well, and in the span of only three years, he has become one of the hottest prospects on the East Coast independent scene.

"Give Vince Goodnite a few years and I think he'll have made a big name for himself," Afa proudly said. "He has all the desire, he has the dedication, and I'm pretty sure that he has the talent, too."

After leaving Afa's school, Goodnite made another move—this one, though, was only a few hundred miles—to Newark, Delaware, and WrestleTech, another one of the East Coast's premier instructional facilities. At WrestleTech, he was trained by current ECW star Simon Diamond.

"Simon, who was known back then as Lance Diamond, worked me real hard," Goodnite said. "He wouldn't let up on me at all. He knew how important becoming a wrestler was to me, so I think he worked me even harder than most. Where Afa taught me the basics, WrestleTech taught me a lot of the idiosyncrasies of the sport. Without both Afa and Simon, though, I know I wouldn't be anywhere close to being the wrestler that I am today."

Where exactly is Goodnite today? Well, for starters, you can find him wrestling in any number of independent federations, including the East Coast Wrestling Association, Pennsylvania Championship Wrestling, and World Xtreme Wrestling, where, along with Eric Von Erich, he has already had a run as the promotion's tag team champions. If you're lucky



Vince Goodnite (against Joe E. Legend) has traveled far, and not just physically, in his pursuit of becoming a wrestling star. If desire and hard work were all it took to make it, he'd be a world champion by now.

enough, you can also find him wrestling in some opening matches on Northeast WWF cards.

"It's like a dream come true," Goodnite said while he tucked a wave of his golden locks behind his ear. "I've only been in the sport three years, and I'm already wrestling in front of tens of thousands of people on WWF shows. It's funny—my friends in Nebraska don't know what to say."

Well, they knew exactly what to say when Goodnite made his debut in front of a crowd of people from his hometown. There were reportedly a lot of *ooooohs* and *aaaaaahs* that night.

"That was a pretty cool night," Goodnite said. "I wrestled and beat Tahitian Warrior in front of my entire family and all my friends. They were watching me do the thing that I had always wanted to do, and because I struggled so hard to do it, it really meant a lot."

Though generally a very pleasant, easy-going guy, there are a few wrestlers who have managed to get on Goodnite's bad side. Ty Street, the ECWA's Mid-Atlantic champ at press time, stands out in particular.

"I'll tell you this about Ty Street," Goodnite said as his eyes slowly

clouded over with what looked to be venom. "He's not a nice guy. I've had him beat a bunch of times, but he always cheats and somehow retains the title. He'll get his, though."

"Goody-two-shoes Goodnite, what a loser," Street said. "Listen to this, it'll bust your gut. We're in a ladder match for my Mid-Atlantic title, and Goodnite actually has the gall to climb up the ladder and steal my title. Well, thankfully, the referee was out, so I hit 'Goody' with a chair, woke the ref up, and pinned him. It was great."

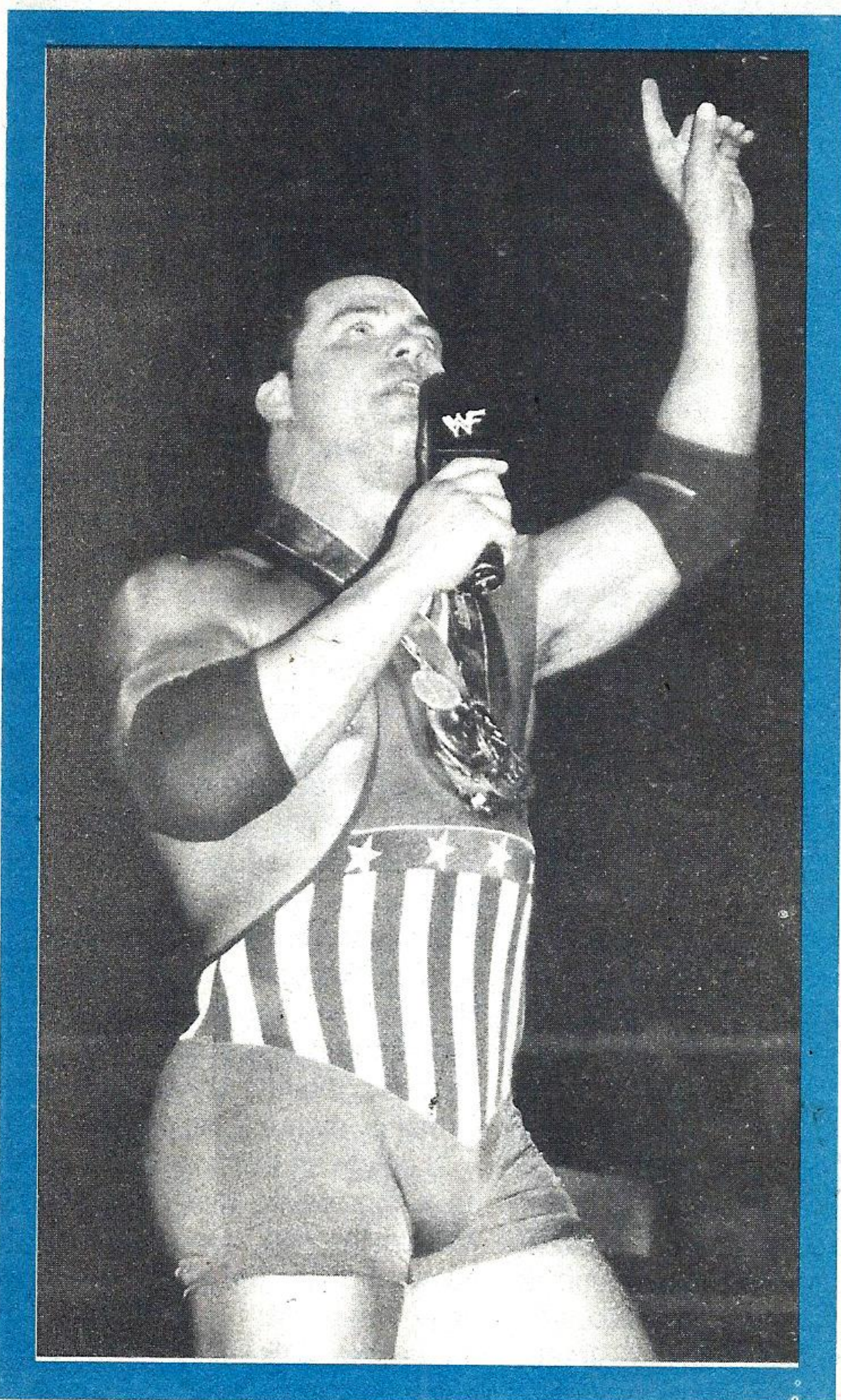
Whether Street got one over on Goodnite that night really isn't relevant. What is relevant is that Goodnite showed himself to be the superior wrestler, and one day, when Street's dirty tactics backfire on him, Goodnite will likely defeat him and become the next ECWA Mid-Atlantic champion. Until that happens, though, Goodnite is simply happy pursuing his dream.

"I only wish that everybody could have the feeling that I get when I walk to the ring," Goodnite said. "I guess, though, that whenever you're doing what you have dreamed of doing your entire life, you can get that feeling anywhere." □

Q

KURT ANGLE

A



KURT ANGLE IS a very serious man. A two-time NCAA champion in wrestling at the conclusion of his college career in 1992, the Clarion University graduate began training in earnest for the 1996 Olympic Games only days after receiving his diploma. After four years of sweating and grinding out match after match on dirty, grimy amateur mats, his hard work paid off: Angle won the 1996 Olympic freestyle wrestling gold medal at 220 pounds.

Surprisingly, Angle was extremely modest after that victory. Of course, that humble version of Angle didn't last very long. When he showed up in the WWF in March 1999, he was already calling himself "the most celebrated real athlete" in the federation.

Angle, however, was able to back up his bold words by building up an impressive winning streak with wins over Terry Taylor, Tiger Ali Singh, Taka Michinoku, Shawn Stasiak, The Godfather, Steve Blackman, Rikishi Phatu, Test, and others. The streak came to a halt, though, on January 31, 2000, when Tazz, who had Angle beaten at the Royal Rumble a week and a day earlier but was disqualified because of his use of the *katahajimi*, prevented Angle from walking away from a match against The Rock. Tazz threw Angle back into the ring, and The Rock scored with a people's elbow and got the pin.

That the loss took place in Pittsburgh, Angle's hometown, had the former Olympian even more enraged as he sat down for this interview with Senior Writer Dave Rosenbaum.

Q: Were you looking forward to wrestling in front of your hometown fans in Pittsburgh?

A: What kind of stupid question is that? Of course I was looking forward to wrestling in front of all my fans in Pittsburgh. The building was sold out that night because I was there. You heard the reaction of that crowd when my music played and I said, "Finally, your Olympic hero has come back to Pittsburgh!"

Q: I thought I heard a few boos that night, quite honestly.

A: Boos? How can anyone boo an American hero like myself? Anyone who boos an Olympic hero has serious problems.

Q: I think they thought you were stealing lines from The Rock.

A: I wasn't stealing anything. I was just being myself. The Olympic hero had come ... home.

Q: There you go again, imitating The Rock. But I guess, in the final analysis, The Rock really laid the smack down on you, didn't he?

A: Only because of interference by Tazz. That's the only reason.

Q: Interference? You were walking back to the locker room. You had quit the match!

A: Quit? An Olympic champion doesn't quit! Did anybody call me a quitter in 1996? No! Did I ever quit when I was in college? No! Kurt Angle is not a quitter. Kurt Angle will never be a quitter. What I was doing was what any intelligent wrestler would do in that situation. I was regaining my composure. I was going for a walk, just trying to slow things down and do some thinking.

Q: Well, I'll let our readers decide whether they believe that. But let me address your prematch comments. I mean, it just doesn't seem to be a very intelligent move to make negative remarks about Mario Lemieux, who's practically an institution in Pittsburgh. I mean, he saved hockey in Pittsburgh. How could you say he has no courage?



Even though Kurt Angle's current repertoire is strongly based on his amateur background, he has had no problem taking to the air, surprising Kane and other WWF competitors.

A: He quit, didn't he?

Q: Yeah, after battling through cancer and incredibly painful back problems.

A: Bottom line: He quit. He quit when Pittsburgh needed him. That's one thing I can guarantee to the great people of the city of Pittsburgh: Kurt Angle will never quit.

Q: Excuse me, Kurt, but when Pittsburgh needed him, Mario Lemieux used his own money to save the franchise. He's done more for sports in the city of Pittsburgh than any man since ...

A: Kurt Angle? Is that what you were about to say?

Q: No, to be honest with you, it wasn't. But I will give you your due: Your victory in the 1996 Olympics was a spectacular achievement. There's no question about it.

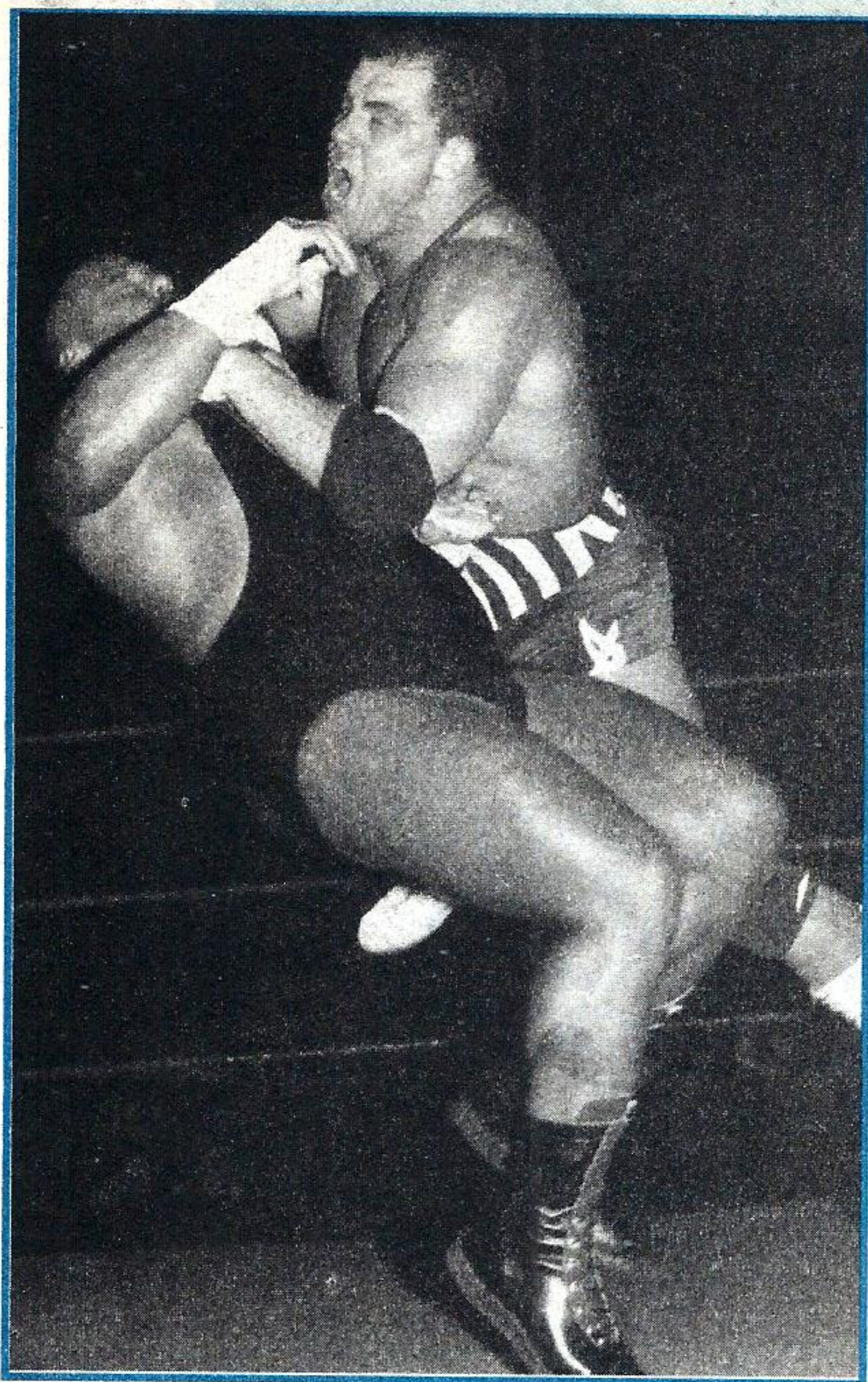
A: Thank you very much. I agree. It was.

Q: But that was amateur wrestling. This is professional wrestling. It's a whole different ballgame.

A: You're right. In the amateur ranks, in the Olympics, I was facing the top athletes in the world every night. Here ... well, look at these guys. Mankind. Cactus Jack. Whatever his name is. You call him an athlete? Triple-H. All muscle, nothing else. Tazz. We wrestle an amateur-style match and I'll have his shoulders pinned to the mat in five seconds or less every time out.

Q: Five seconds or less? Is that a guarantee you're making?

A: Everything that comes out of my mouth is a guarantee. And another thing, the kind of stuff that goes on around here—



Apparently, Angle is not up on his ECW history. Tazz, one of the sport's best mat wrestlers, will never be beaten in five seconds or less. Angle, though, believes he could beat the former ECW World champ that fast. One word: wrong.

nobody could ever get away with in amateur wrestling. Like The Rock jumping me before the bell. What's that all about? You do that in the Olympics, you get disqualified. They probably never let you compete again. All of this wrestling in the crowd and the interference ...

Q: If I remember correctly, Steve Blackman once interfered on your behalf and saved your winning streak.

With wins over The Godfather and other WWF mid-carders, Angle had built up a pretty impressive winning streak. Unfortunately, he let the streak go to his head.

A: Steve Blackman interfered on my behalf? When was that? The way I remember it, Blackman got in the ring and hit me over the head with a kendo stick. You call that interfering on my behalf?

Q: Well, I think it was clear what he was up to. He wanted to save your winning streak, and the best way to do that was to make it seem as if he was interfering on Kane's behalf.

A: Buddy, you're thinking too much. Way too much. That shot hurt. Don't try to tell me what Blackman was doing.

Q: Yeah, well ...

A: Yeah, well, nothing. Blackman knows me better than that. I don't need anybody's help. I never have. Kane was going

down that night, with or without Blackman's help.

Q: He was dominating the match at the time.

A: The key there: at the time. That's the way it is in wrestling. Sometimes you're losing, sometimes you're winning, but the only thing that counts is what happens at the end.

Q: And Tazz' interference in your match against The Rock?

A: Again, interference that shouldn't have been allowed. I was going to beat The Rock fair and square in front of all my adoring fans in Pittsburgh.

Q: The thing I can't understand, though, is how you claimed to be undefeated after you had lost to Tazz at the Royal Rumble.

A: I don't remember losing to Tazz at the Royal Rumble.

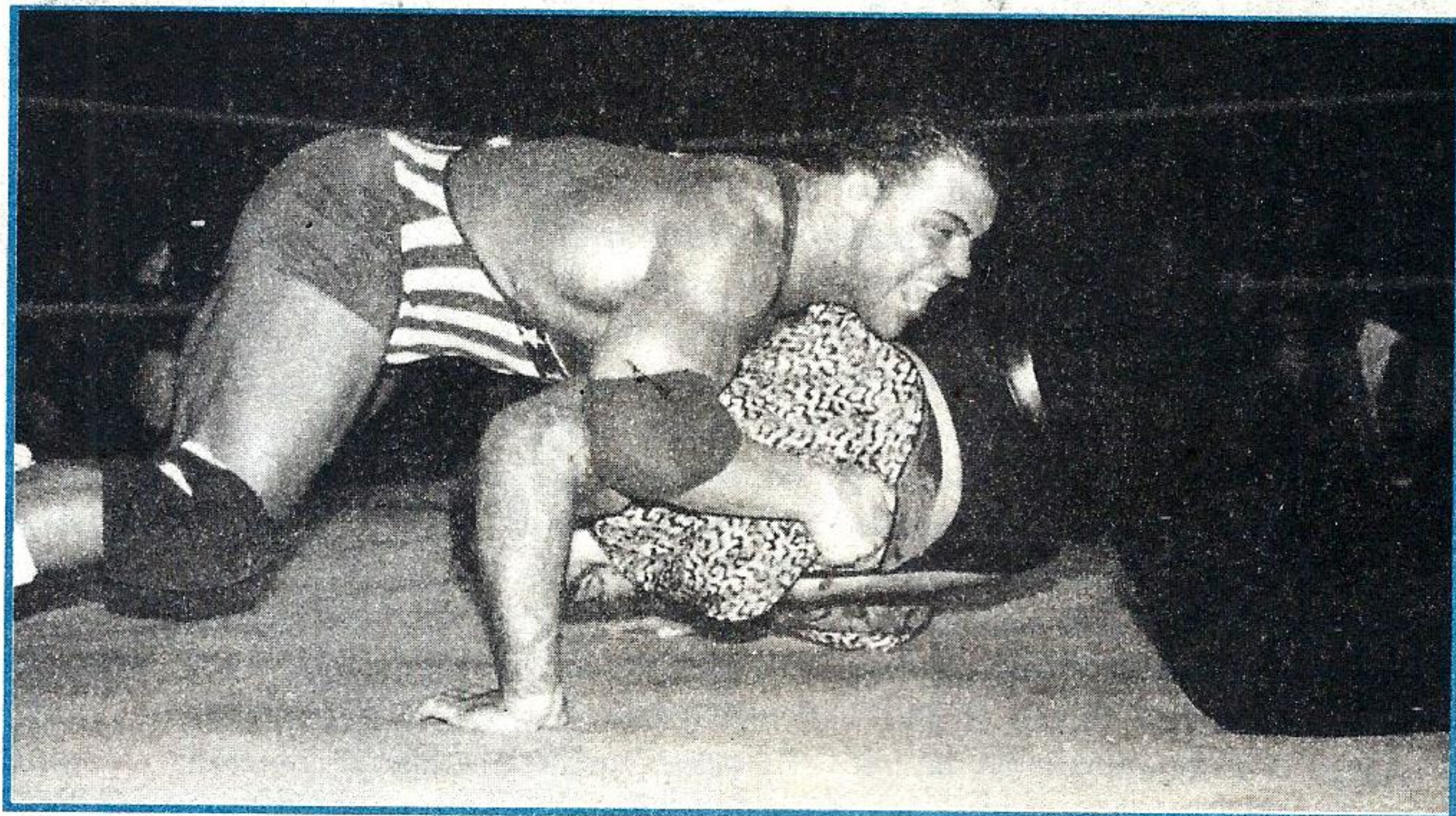
Q: To tell you the truth, I don't think the record books care about what you remember. The fact is that Tazz had you rendered unconscious at the Rumble and you lost.

A: His sleeper—whatever he calls it—is illegal. Everybody knows it.

Q: Not everybody.

A: Listen, nobody knows the rules of wrestling better than I do. If you're accusing me of misrepresenting the rules, then you're wrong.

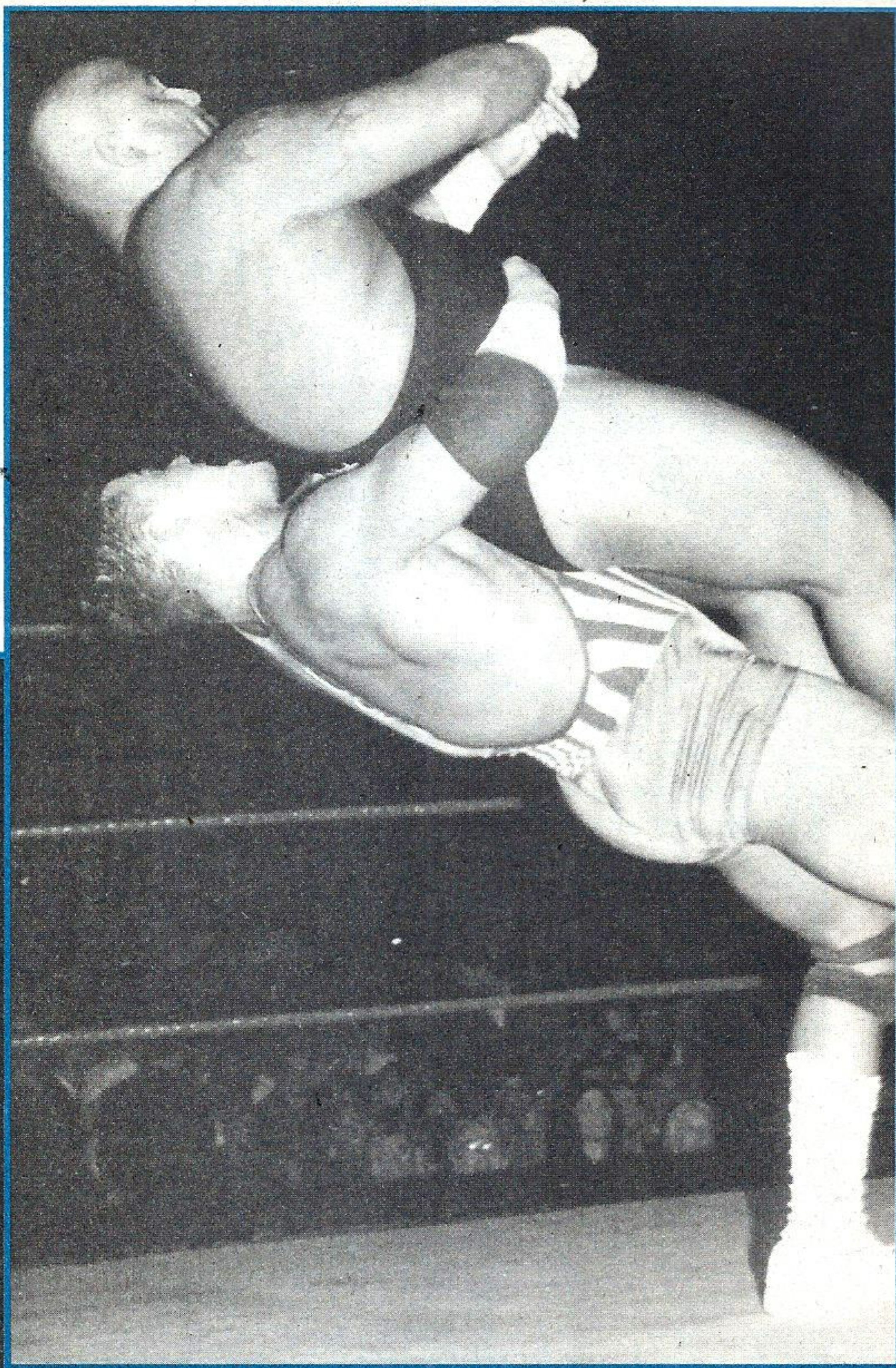
Q: Well, the bottom line is that you did lose, to The Rock ...



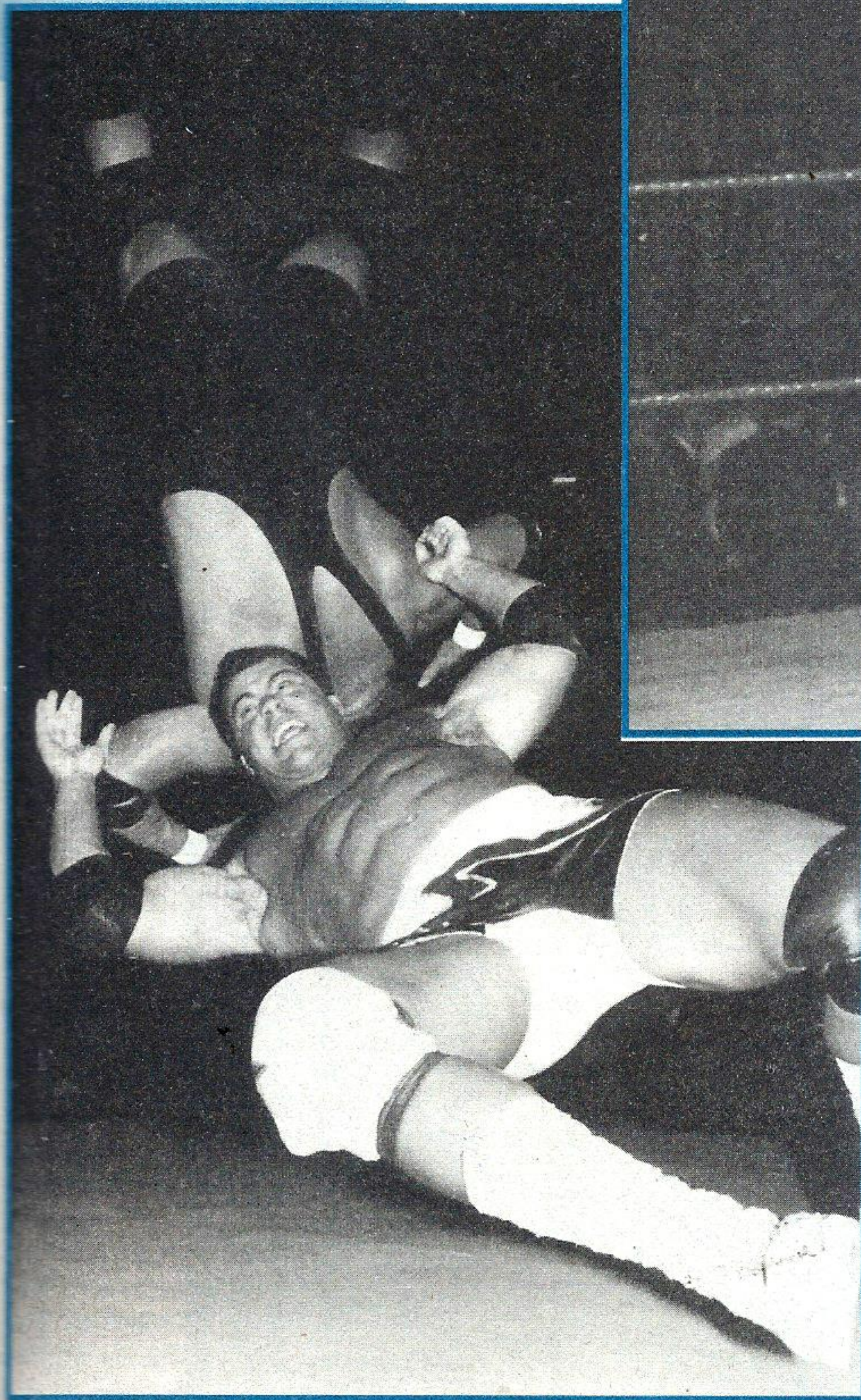
A: I'm questioning the validity of that match concerning Tazz' interference.

Q: Whatever. But it's interesting the The Rock was able to do what Triple-H couldn't do: end your winning streak.

A: Why is that interesting? There's nothing at all interesting about that! The fact is that the entire WWF seems to be conspiring against me, because I'm the only real athlete around here these days. People are going crazy over this blowhard The Rock, but all he does is talk and



When he's in the ring with Tazz now, Angle tries to keep "The Human Suplex Machine" in front of him at all times. He doesn't want to feel the humiliation of being choked out yet again.



Given time and a lot more in-ring experience, Angle (suplexing Steve Bradley) could become one of the best WWF wrestlers to come along in a long while. Let's hope his attitude changes somewhere down the pike.

talk and talk. He could never get down on the mat with me and get past 10 seconds ...

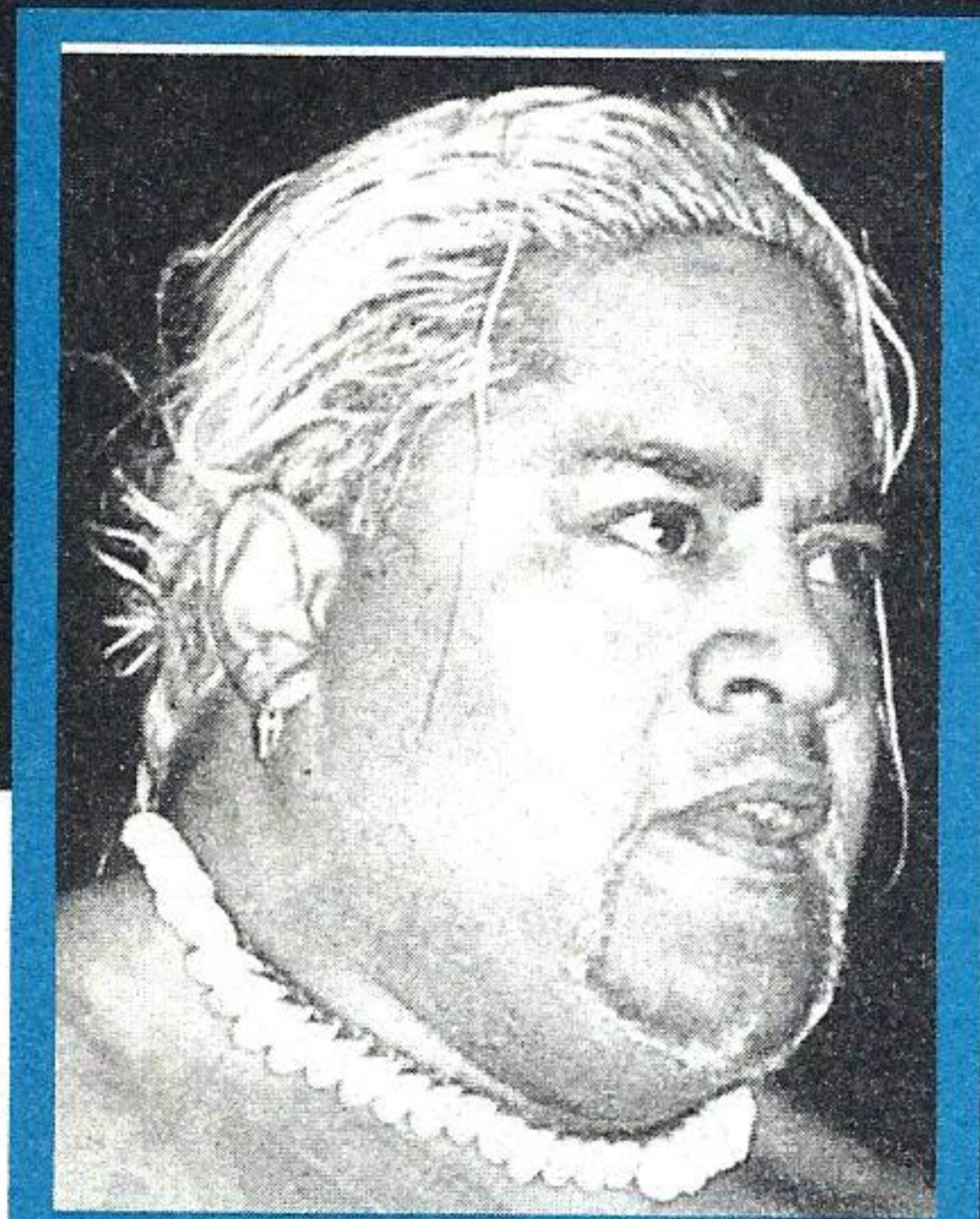
Q: Wait, let me get this straight. Tazz would last five seconds, and The Rock wouldn't last 10 seconds.

A: That's right, and that's the bottom line. The day is going to come, very soon, in fact, when Kurt Angle becomes the first man to win Olympic gold and become WWF champion. As long as I keep following the three "I's": intensity, integrity, and intelligence. Go ahead and bank on it, my friend. □

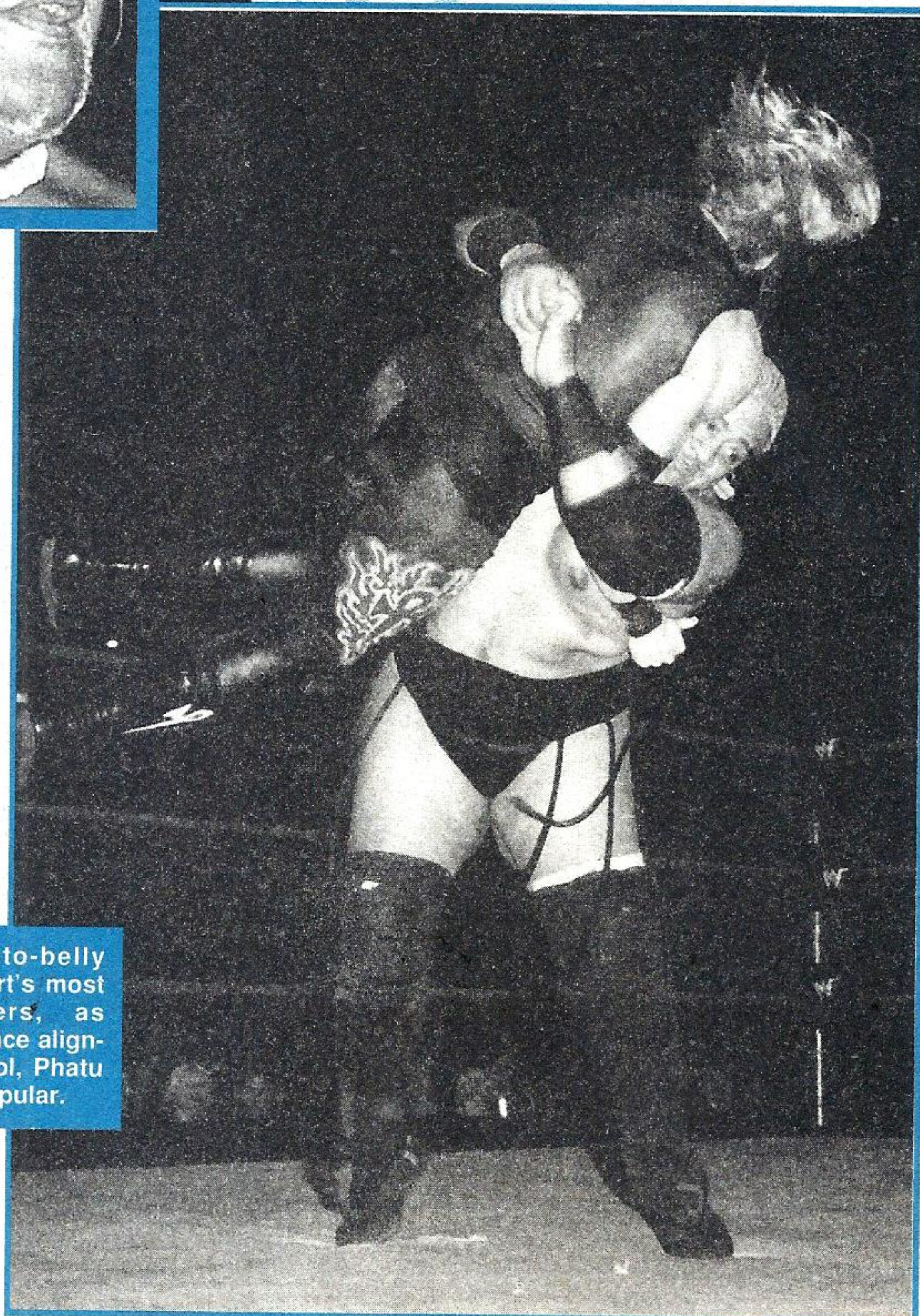
X-Ray

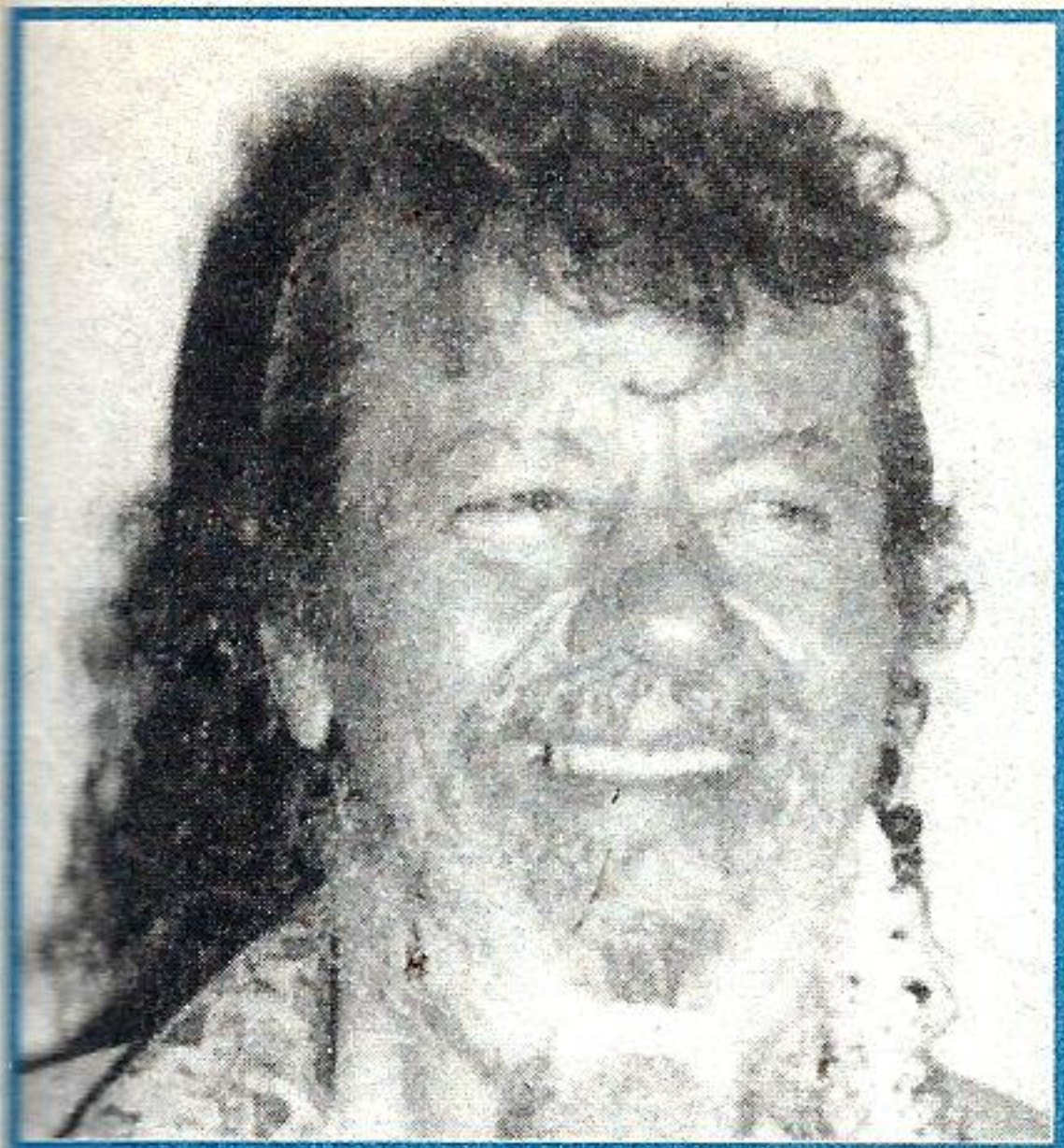
THE WRESTLER PANEL EXAMINES

RIKISHI PHATU



Rikishi Phatu's belly-to-belly suplex is one of the sport's most devastating maneuvers, as Christian can tell you. Since aligning himself with Too Cool, Phatu has become incredibly popular.





CAPT. LOU ALBANO

"Almost everybody knows this, but for those who don't, I have to tell you that I managed Rikishi when he was simply known as Fatu and was one-half of The Headshrinkers. I'll tell you this, too, daddy: He's the most athletic big man I've ever met in my life. For many wrestlers, all that extra bulk would be a problem, but for Rikishi, his weight just adds to his power. I'm glad to see that he's doing well, and I expect him to make a lot more noise in the WWF."

Capt. Lou Albano, "The Guiding Light," has managed 13 different tag teams to a record 17 WWF World tag titles.



KILLER KOWALSKI

"Everybody is going crazy over the guy with the big rear end. He has some skills—I'll give him that—but he needs to stay away from those clowns known as Too Cool. They're bringing him down. He needs to work on his wrestling, not his dancing. People tell me he's doing better than ever because he's getting a lot of title shots, but I say this: If he was wrestling with the same gusto he had a couple of years ago, he'd probably be the WWF World champion by now."

Killer Kowalski, one of the most sadistic rule-breakers in the history of the sport, runs a wrestling school in Malden, Massachusetts.



MASSA SAITO

"Rikishi Phatu is a very interesting wrestler. He reminds me of Yokozuna, except Rikishi is much more agile and athletic. Rikishi isn't just a blob with a big backside. He's a solid wrestler who actually knows how to throw his weight around. You don't see that very often. But he also needs to develop some mat-based maneuvers and holds. Otherwise, he will become very predictable, and quicker wrestlers will learn to exploit his lack of mobility."

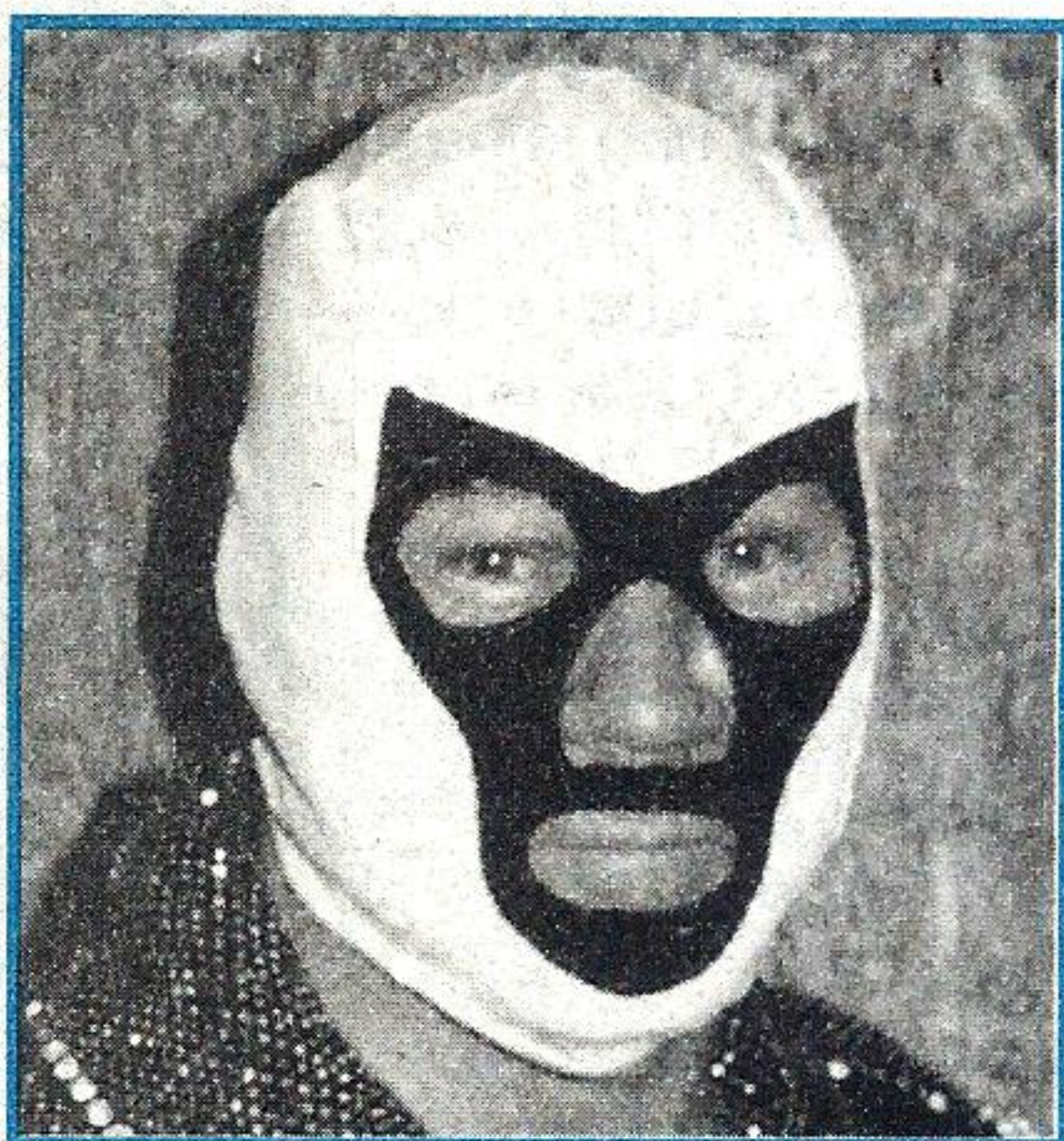
Massa Saito, a former AWA World heavyweight and WWF tag team champion, recently retired after a 24-year career.



FABULOUS MOOLAH

"I've got nothin' but good things to say about Rikishi, hon, even if he did steal my World title shot against Triple-H. Anyway, the best thing going about this guy is that he's a leader. He doesn't back down from anyone—never has and never will. You should see the way the locker room has come together in support of him. You'd think that everyone would be jealous of his popularity, but they're not. They know that Rikishi is a good guy with a lot of talent."

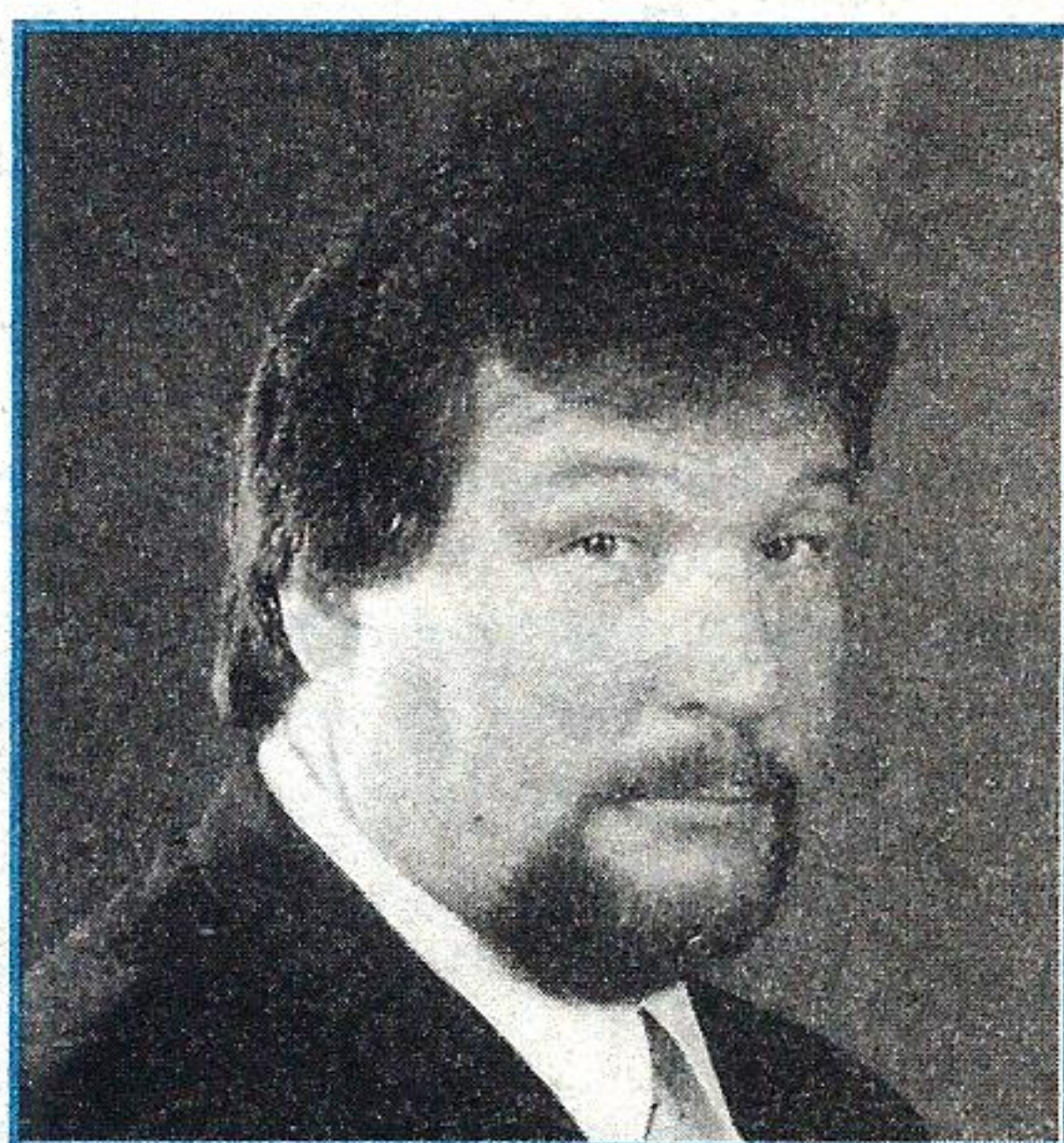
Fabulous Moolah, the finest woman wrestler in history, held the World title for more than 28 years. She is now a trainer and part-time competitor.



MR. WRESTLING II

"I never liked wrestling guys like Rikishi, because when you're in the ring with someone his size, it doesn't matter how good you are technically. He's simply too big to wrestle on the mat. With such a huge leverage advantage, he can just attack, and unless you're a really skilled escape artist, he's going to eventually nail you with one of his power moves. A lot of people might not want to admit it, but Rikishi is definitely a star that has come into his own."

Mr. Wrestling II, one of wrestling's most popular and accomplished stars, held many regional tag team and singles titles throughout the South.



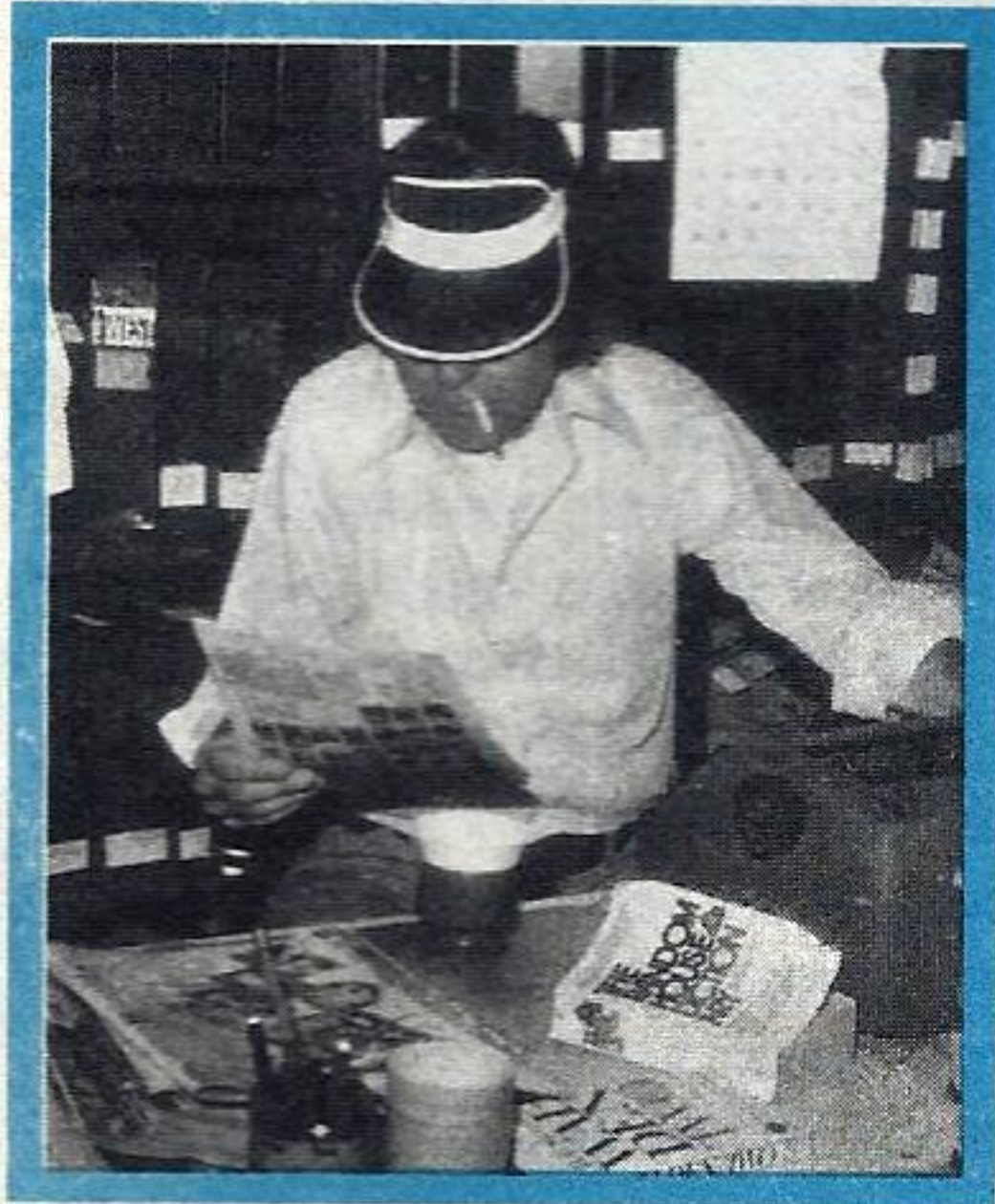
TED DiBIASE

"People are surprised by Phatu's success, but I knew this guy would be good way back in '94 when he won the WWF tag team title as one of The Headshrinkers. Me and Mike Rotundo wrestled those guys a whole bunch of times, and they were never easy matches. I don't know if all that weight is gonna help him in the ring, but he's over in a real big way with the fans. In today's world, that's good enough to get you a few title shots at least."

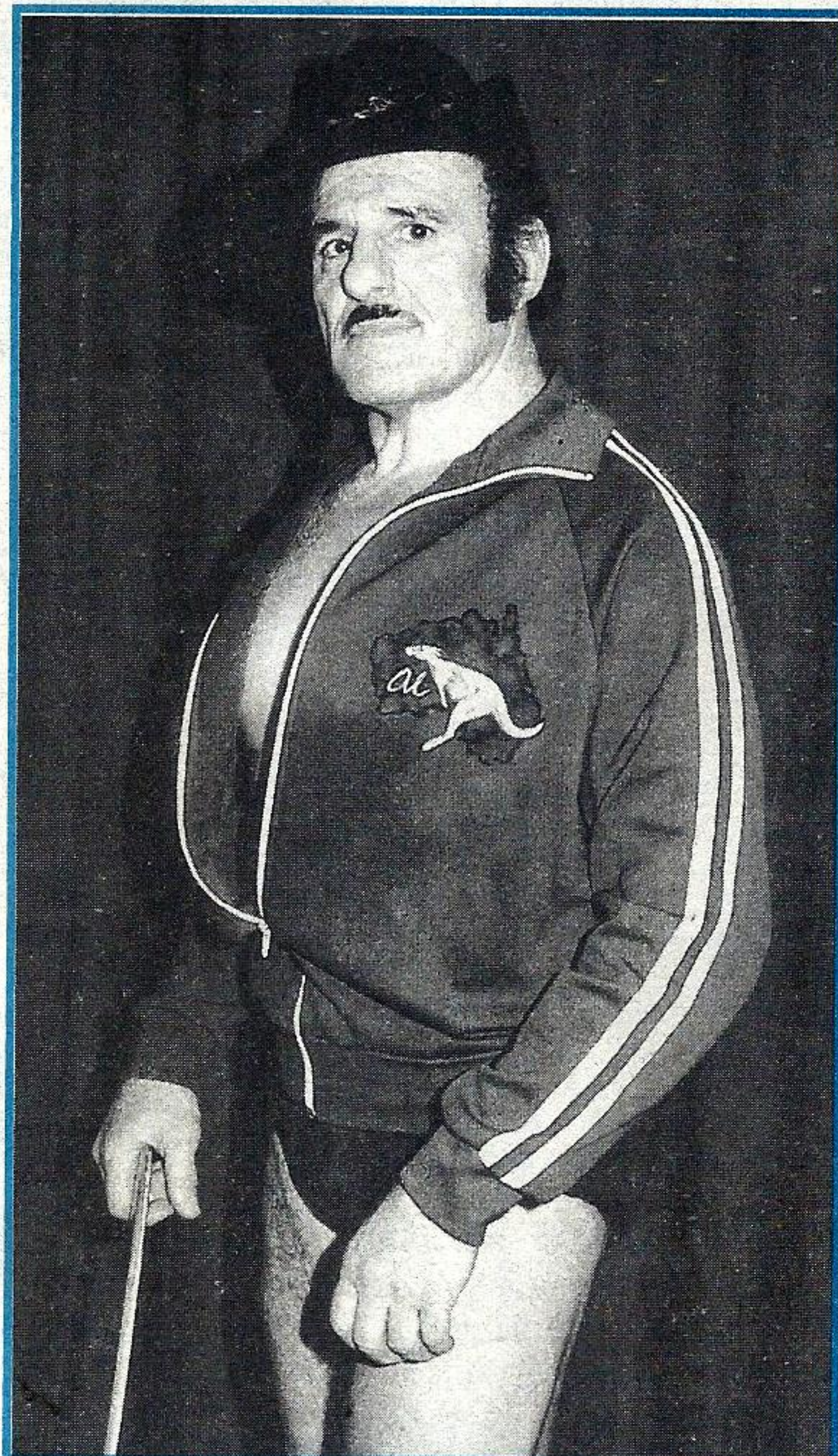
Ted DiBiase, a three-time WWF tag team champ and an accomplished manager, now works for a new Florida-based independent promotion called WXO.

MATT BROCK

Remembers



AL COSTELLO



Al Costello wasn't a real popular guy among the fans, but I'll sure miss him now that he's no longer with us. He had a lot of talent. Real, real smart, too.

THIS WAS GOING to be about Dusty Rhodes, who recently made his return to the ring, although for what reason is hard to say, because as far as this reporter can see, Rhodes isn't hard up financially and has no reason to besmirch a legend that he carefully built for two decades. Instead, though, I'm going to put aside Rhodes for a month or two—hoping that at the same time he decides to put aside his comeback—and write about one of the great wrestlers of the 1950s and '60s.

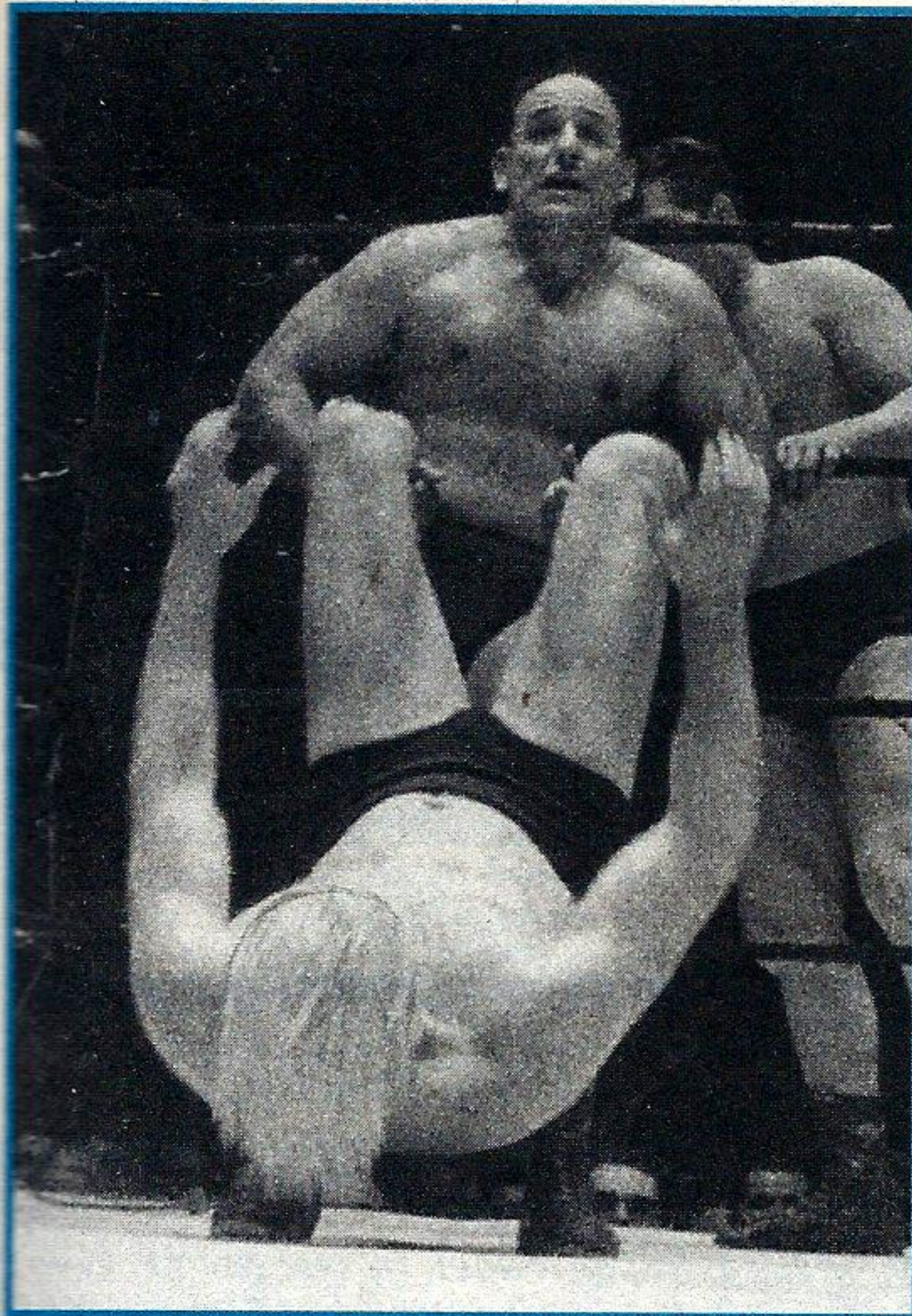
I'm talking about Al Costello, who was one-half of the Fabulous Kangaroos tag team. You might have never heard of The Fabulous Kangaroos, but during the 1950s and '60s, there weren't many more famous tag teams in the world. Three times in the 1960s, The Kangaroos won what is now called the WWF World tag team championship. Two of those three times, they beat Red and Lou Bastien, about as tough a team as I've ever seen, and the other time they beat Johnny Valentine and Chief Big

Heart, two other tough customers. The Kangaroos weren't tough, but they were wily, and you would have had to have searched far and wide to have found a tag team nearly as talented.

The other half of the Kangaroos was Roy Heffernan, but Costello was by far the more famous half. They were never fan favorites, always rulebreakers, which would be considered a strange thing in this day and age, when the teams with the talent tend to be fan favorites and the teams that brawl tend to be rulebreakers. Part of the reason the fans hated Costello and Heffernan was because they were foreigners through and through, and it might surprise you to know that in the 1950s, wrestling fans around the United

States weren't too enamored with Australia.

Costello called himself "The Man Of 1,001 Holds," and he had



The matches Costello and his partner, Roy Heffernan, had with guys like Johnny Valentine were my kind of matches. Not a lot of sports entertainment garbage in those matches. Just good, solid wrestling.

down to Grand Central Station, and caught the next train to Washington. Got there just in time for the cab to pull up at bell time.

When I walked into the building, wouldn't you know that the first person I ran in to was Costello. He smiled when he saw me.

"Smart man, Brock," Costello said. "The Bastiens don't have what it takes to beat us tonight. Heffernan and I are already getting fitted for the tag belts."

He was kidding, of course, but that's how confident he was. A few minutes later, I ran into Red Bastien, who never thought he was going to lose a match, but when I asked him how things were going, he answered, "About as well as could be expected."

The tag team match was the main event, and it was a beauty. The Bastiens might not have sounded confident, but they were

intent on defending the belts. What they couldn't defend against, though, was some well-timed thievery by Costello, who clearly was going to do everything within and outside the rules to win the belts. Costello ended up getting the pin—my memory is shaky on which Bastien he pinned—and before you knew it, every fan in the building was booing this turn of events.

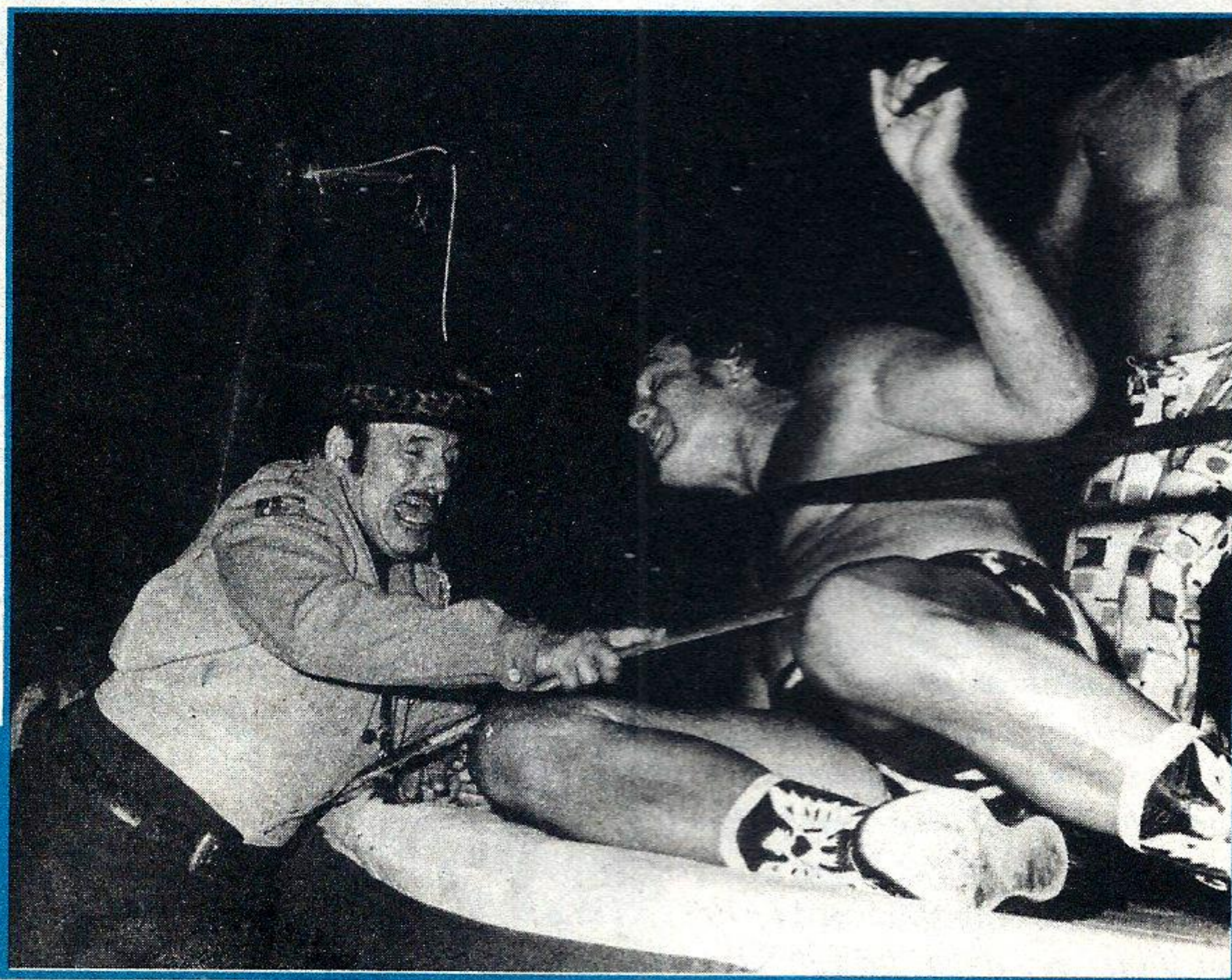
Later on, I ran in to Costello in the dressing room, and all he did was wink at me and say, "I told you so." Later on, I rung up Stanley Weston to give him the news, and he said the same thing: "I told you so." Mr. Weston wasn't one to say, "I told you so," but this time indeed he did.

Al Costello died the other day. He was 80 years old and died of pneumonia at his home in Clearwater, Florida. I hadn't seen him in close to 20 years, even though in the 1980s, he opened a wrestling training facility in Michigan. Al Snow, whom Costello trained, called him "a great teacher and a wonderful man," which was right on the mark. You're not going to run across the likes of Al Costello too often in this world. □

at least that many. I lost count. Later in his career, after the Kangaroos broke up, he teamed with Don Kent, who really was a tough guy, and they were managed by Crybaby George Cannon, a big man who drew the ire of pretty much every wrestling fan whose path he crossed. If there's one thing you could say about Costello, it was that he knew how to perform and play in front of a crowd.

The first time The Kangaroos won the title was on July 21, 1960, in Washington, D.C. I remember the night pretty well, because earlier in the day Stanley Weston, the founder of this magazine, called me from his office and said, "Brock, you'd better get down to D.C. I have a feeling Costello and Heffernan might win the tag straps tonight." Well, if there's one thing I'd learned, it was to trust Stanley's instincts. He's a wise man, and his instincts are usually dead on. So I grabbed my Remington, headed

Even as he started to get on in years, Al stayed involved in the sport—and he wasn't afraid to get physical, either. Here's a shot of him hitting Bob Ellis. A lot of people learned a lot about this business from Al.



Spotlight N...

VADER

WHEN VADER WAS let out of his WWF contract in March 1998, he went to Japan in an effort to salvage what was left of his career. He had no idea that Vader time was about to begin again.

Vader made his pro debut in 1985 as "Baby Bull" Leon White (his real name) in the AWA. Stan Hansen, Bruiser Brody, and Crusher Blackwell gave him painful greetings. After recovering from a broken leg (courtesy of Brody), Vader travelled to Mexico, Canada, and Europe and won several titles.

While in Europe, Vader was signed by New Japan Pro Wrestling. By 1991, he was a three-time IWGP heavyweight champion, having defeated Shinya Hashimoto (1989), Riki Choshu (also 1989), and Tatsumi Fujinami (1991) for the championship. Vader had won the IWGP International tag team title with Bam Bam Bigelow on March 1, 1992, as well, but by this time, he was also a threat to WCW World champion Sting.

Under the guidance of Harley Race, Vader won his first WCW World title from Sting on July 12, 1992. An ensuing feud with Ron Simmons saw the title change hands twice in the fall of '92. Sting avenged his earlier loss on March 11, 1993, but Vader regained the belt just six



days later, proving he was no fluke champion.

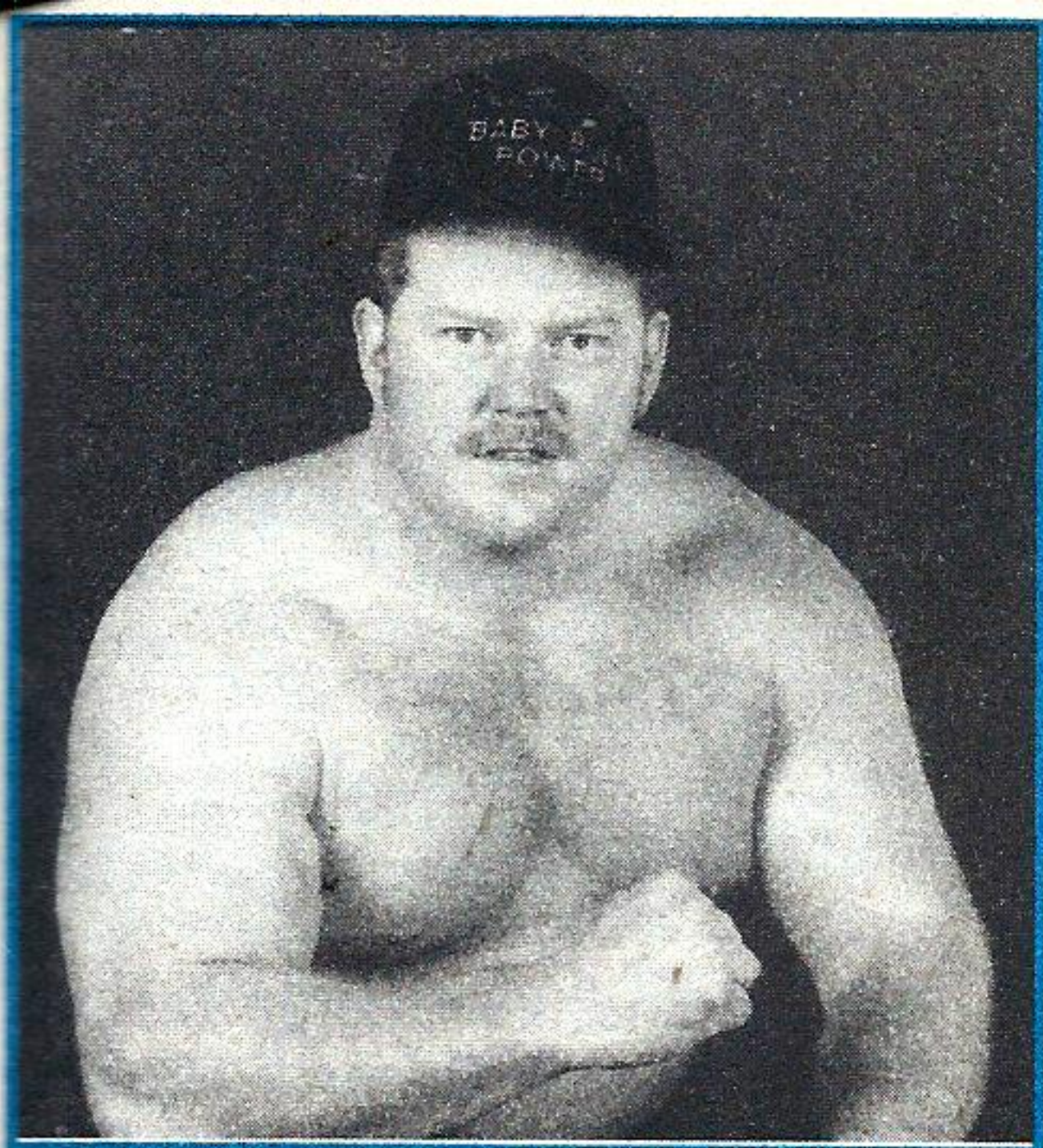
Vader added to his aura by intensifying his attack: Cactus Jack suffered a severe concussion and amnesia as a result of a beating administered by Vader, while preliminary wrestler Joe Thurman had his back broken after a particularly violent power bomb.

These types of brutal offenses led to Vader being stripped of the U.S. title, which he won from Jim Duggan in December 1994. Vader also main-

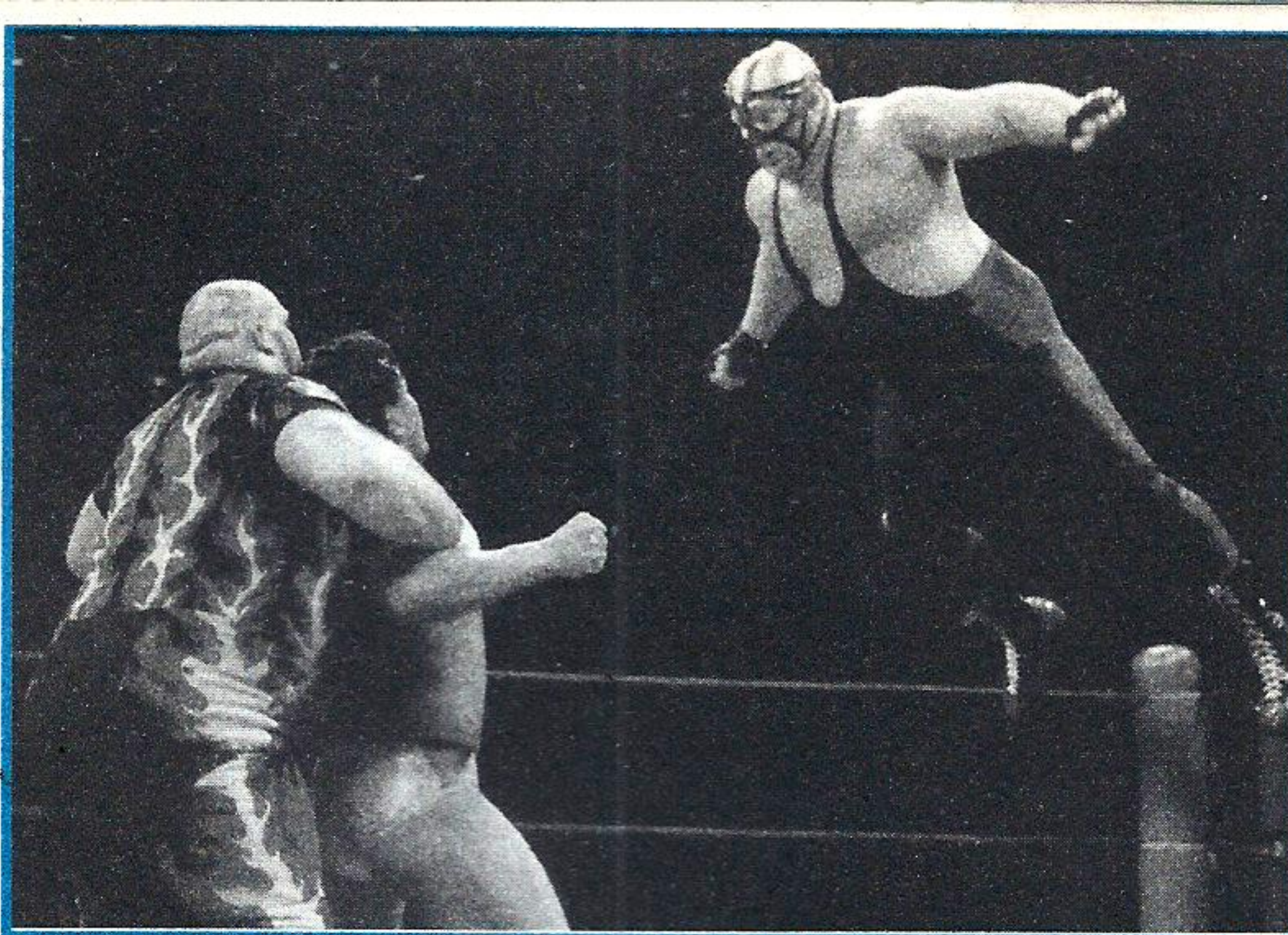
tained a violent reputation overseas in Japan's UWF promotion, where he won the heavyweight title as Super Vader in December 1994. Eventually, the travel and his feuds with Cactus Jack, Ric Flair, Ray Traylor, and Hulk Hogan took their toll. In an ironic twist, a series of serious injuries suffered at Bash at the Beach '95 led to Vader's release from the company later that year.

In 1996, Vader went to work for the WWF despite his injuries and disappointed WWF officials with his physical limitations. "The Mastadon" did fight his way into title contention, but in April 1997, he committed a public relations gaffe by attacking a Kuwaiti talk show host when the host asked him if wrestling was fake. Feeling he had fallen out of favor with the WWF, Vader obtained his release in March '98.

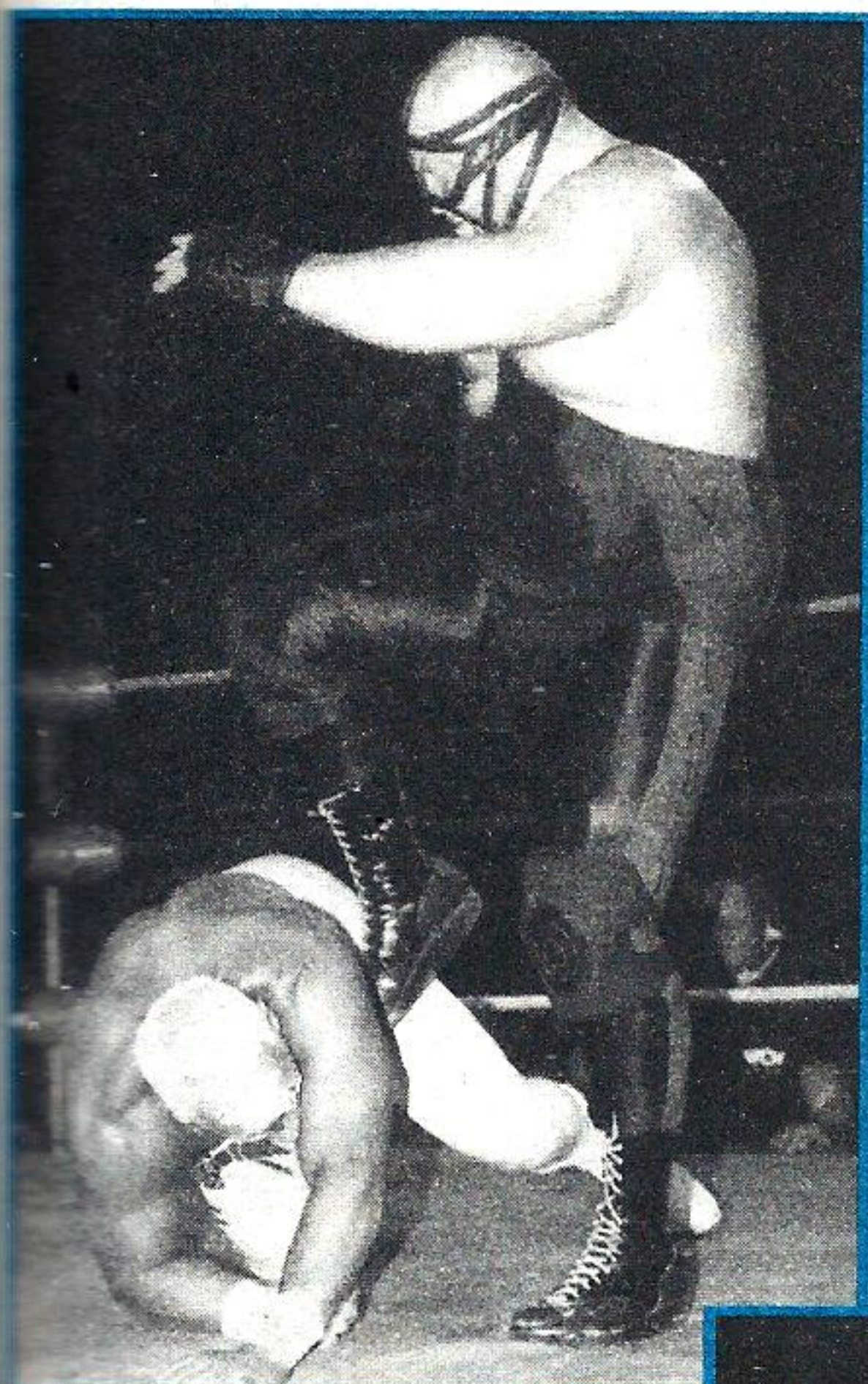
At this point, he headed to All-Japan Pro Wrestling to wind down his career and discovered there were a few title reigns left in him. On March 6, 1999, he defeated Akira Taue for the Triple Crown and won it again on October 30 from Mitsuharu Misawa. Unfortunately, Vader was overlooked by the Japanese press when it came time to vote for 1999's Pro Wrestling MVP, but we recognize him as an international force and honor him here in our "Spotlight."



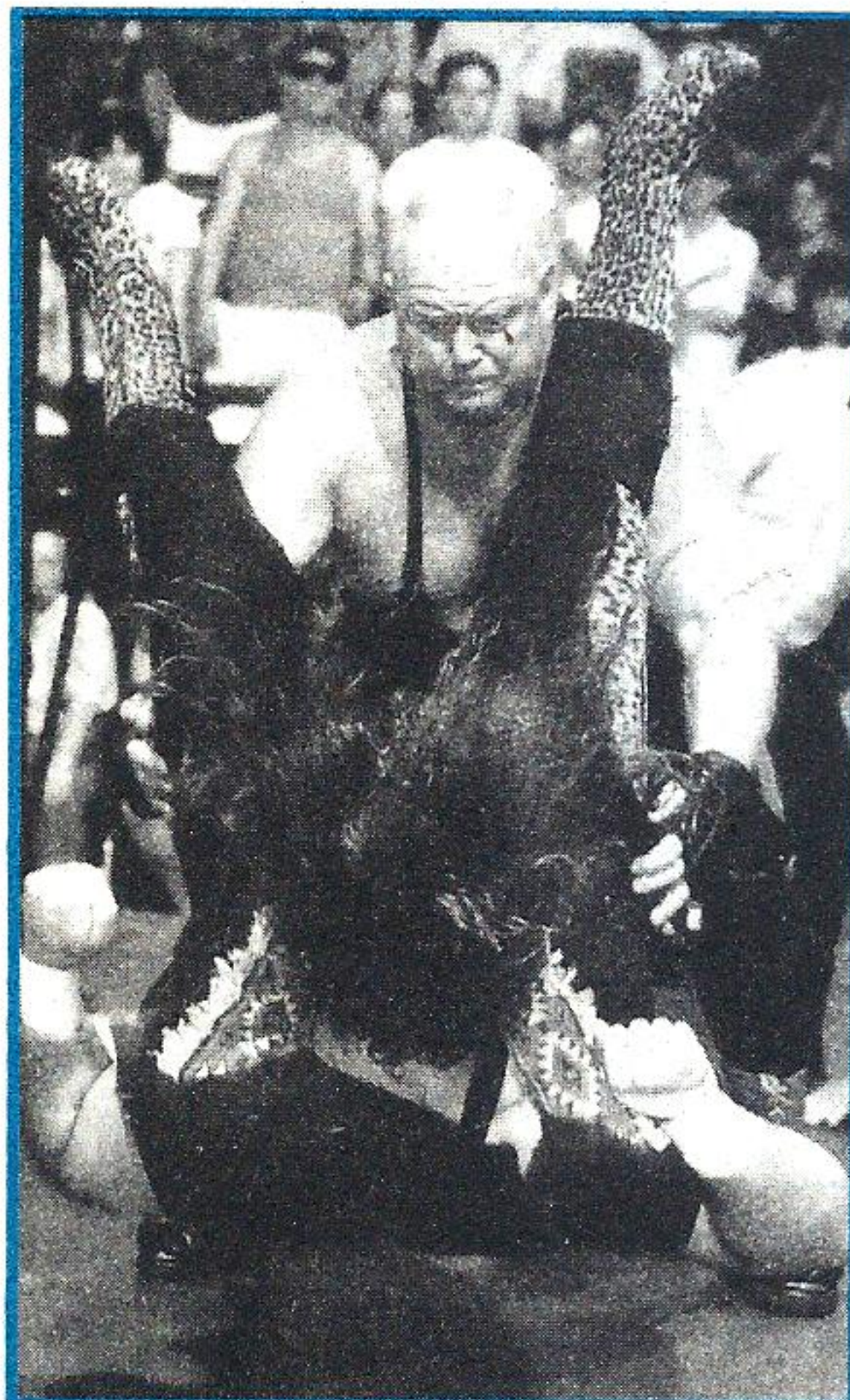
February 1986: Vader, known then by his real name, Leon White, was a fan favorite early in his career. After feuding with Stan Hansen and Bruiser Brody, he became a decidedly meaner wrestler.



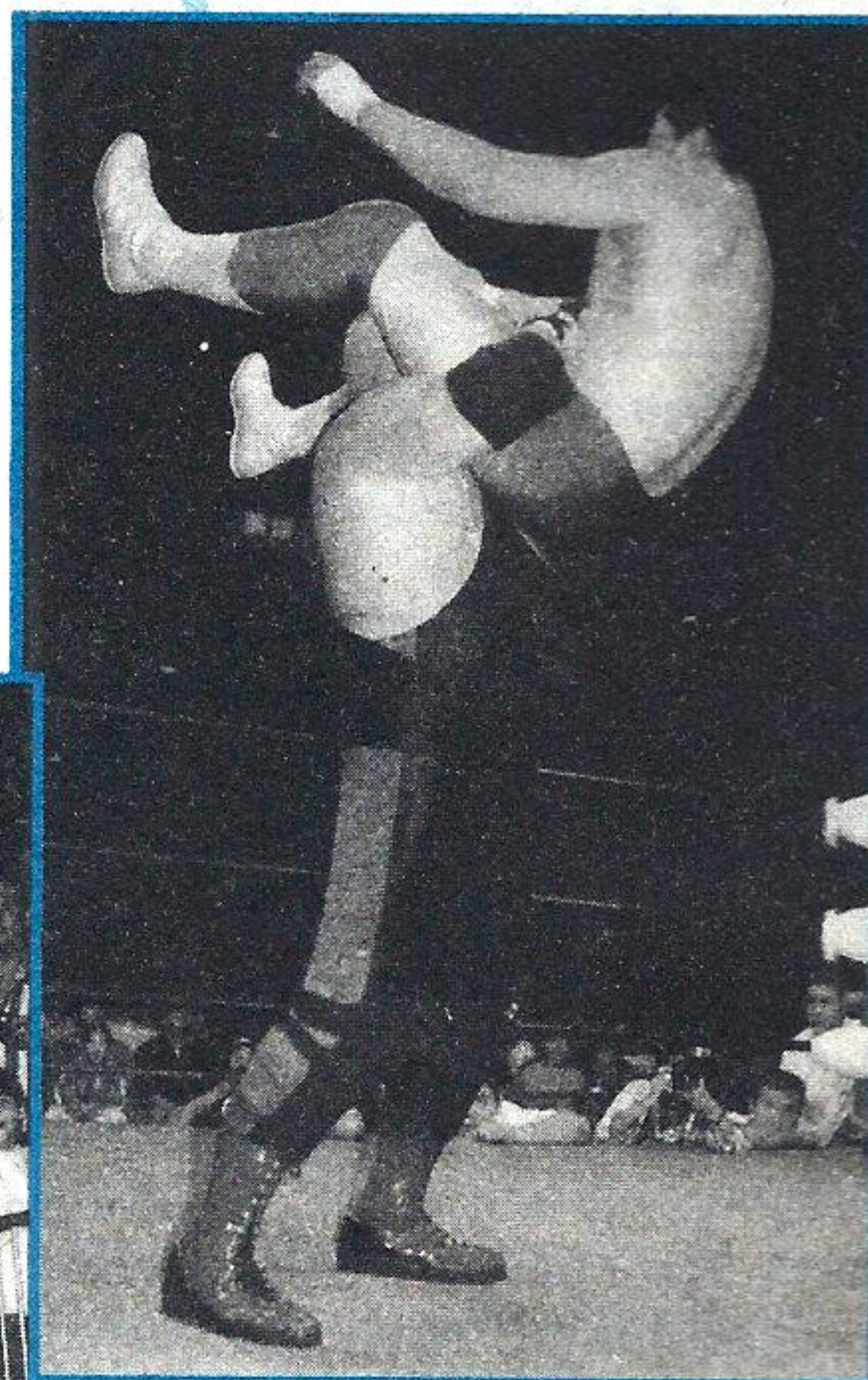
March 1992: With Bam Bam Bigelow, Vader won the IWGP tag title from Hiroshi Hase and Keiji Muto, but by this time, he was accustomed to wearing gold in Japan. He was already a three-time IWGP heavyweight champ.



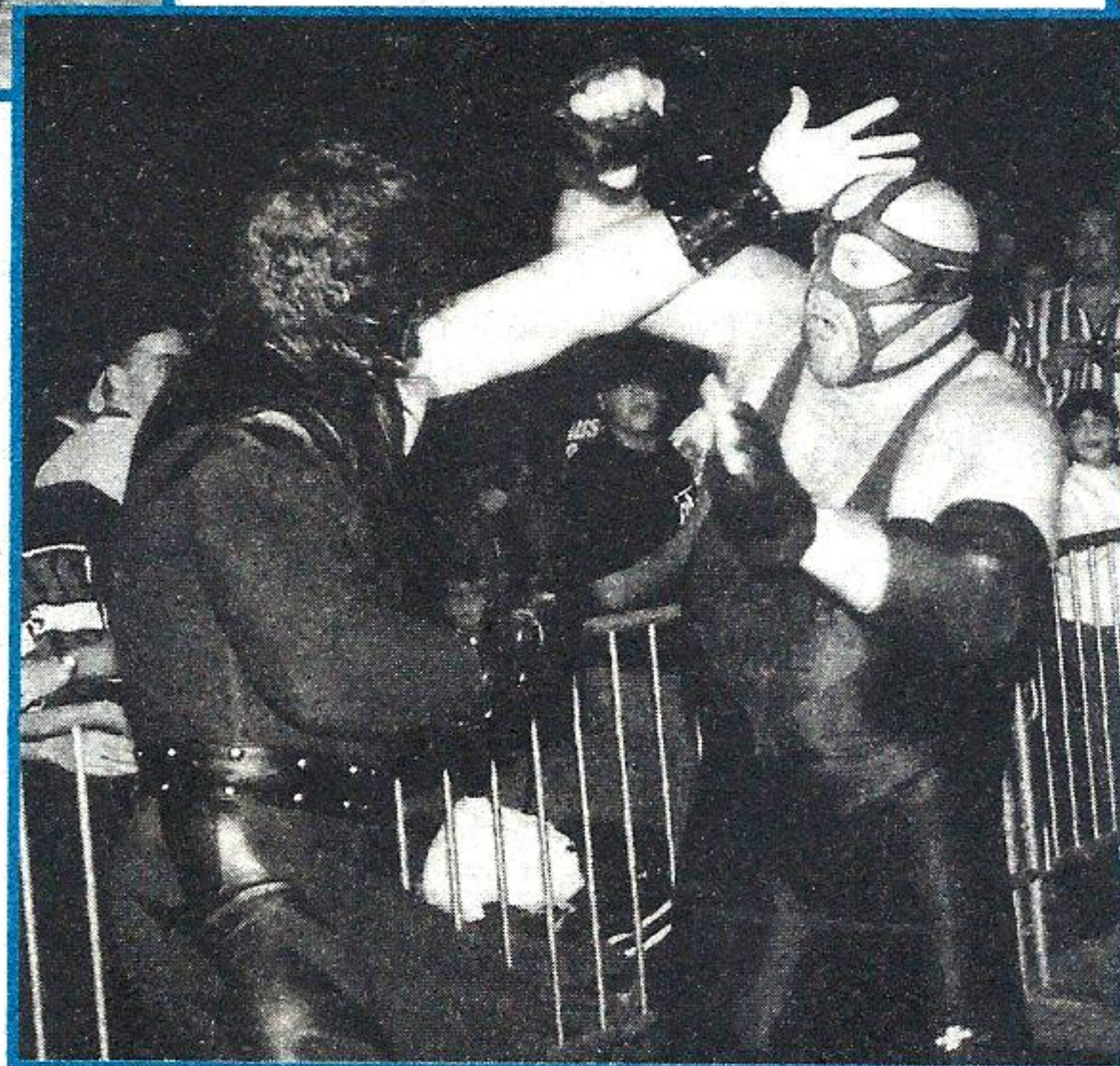
July 1992: One of Vader's first WCW feuds was with Sting. Managed by Harley Race, Vader stunned the champion at The Great American Bash to win the first of his three WCW World titles.



July 1994: Vader was at his most violent when he faced Cactus Jack in a series of shocking matches. Cactus lost an ear and several brain cells to Vader's awesome attacks.



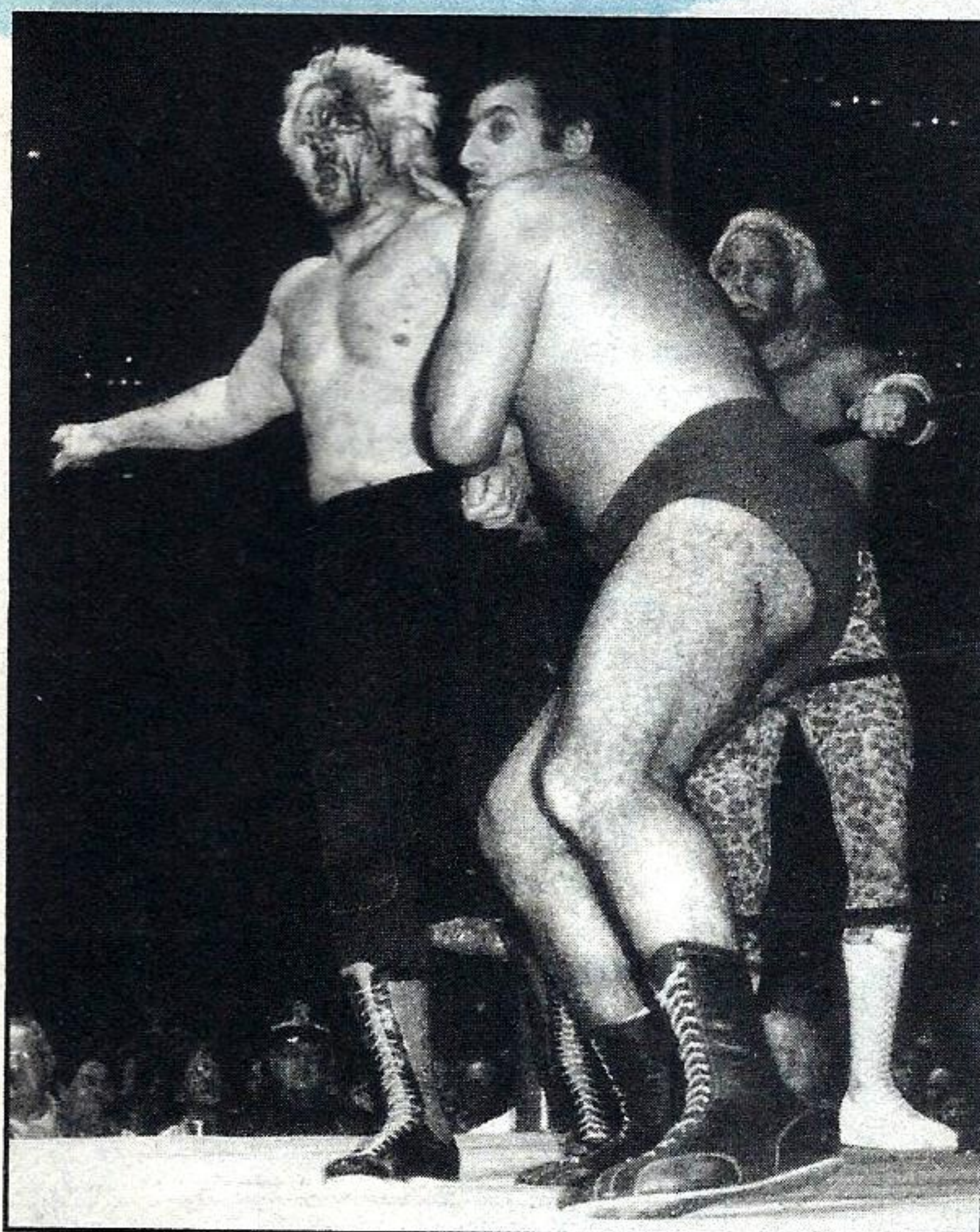
November 1997: WWF officials were disappointed in Vader's performance. He came in physically hobbled and left pretty much the same way after Kane annihilated him in a one-sided feud.



October 1999: Vader felt like he was reborn when he returned to Japan. He has two Triple Crown title reigns and a singles tourney win to his credit—and he can say he pinned the great Mitsuharu Misawa.

Scrapbook

Explore with us the rich history of this great sport as we recall the important news stories at five-year intervals dating back a quarter of a century



The underdog team of Dominic DeNucci and Victor Rivera scored an upset victory over WWF tag champs Jimmy and Johnny Valiant much to the surprise and delight of their fans.

**MAY/JUNE
1975**

DOMINIC DeNUCCI AND Victor Rivera won the WWF World tag team title from Johnny and Jimmy Valiant on May 13 as thousands of shocked fans watched on television ... Harley Race, the number-one contender to Jack Brisco's NWA title, joined forces with Roger Kirby to win the Florida tag team title ... Rumors persisted of a split between AWA World tag team champions Ray Stevens and Nick Bockwinkel ... Ivan Putski, upset with Bobby Heenan's constant interference,

challenged the manager to a special match in Winnipeg in which Bobby would be declared the winner if Putski could not secure the victory within 10 minutes. Heenan's strategy to run away did not work. Putski caught up with him and beat him to a bloody pulp. Unfortunately, Putski lost track of time and was declared the loser when 10 minutes passed ... Dusty Rhodes was disqualified for throwing Blackjack Mulligan over the top rope in a match in Greensboro, North Carolina ... Jack Brisco applied a Boston crab to retain his NWA title against

Prof. Toru Tanaka in Mississippi ... Waldo Von Erich, under the management of Fred Blassie, defeated Bruno Sammartino on cuts ... A match between two of the most maniacal wrestlers in history pitted "Crazy" Luke Graham against The Sheik. No one, including the ring announcer, escaped the frenzied action. The Sheik was disqualified for attacking the referee.

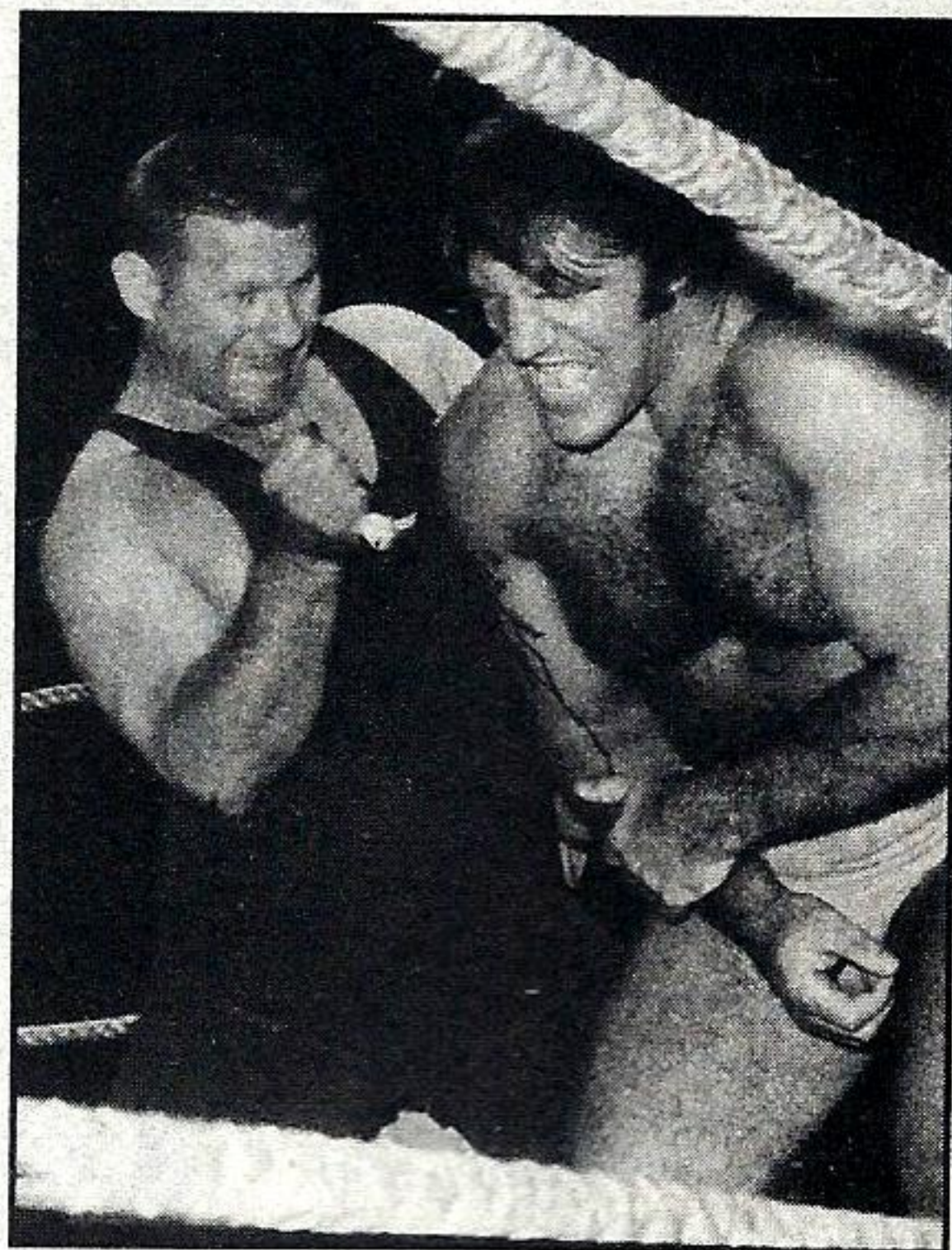
NWA RATINGS: 1—Jack Brisco; 2—Harley Race; 3—Shohei "Giant" Baba; 4—Dory Funk Jr.; 5—The Sheik; 6—Paul Jones; 7—Jerry Lawler; 8—Jose Lothario; 9—Pepper Gomez; 10—Terry Funk.

WWF RATINGS: 1—Bruno

Sammartino; 2—George Steele; 3—Waldo Von Erich; 4—Bobby Duncum; 5—Spiros Arion; 6—Jimmy Valiant; 7—Ivan Putski; 8—Chief Jay Strongbow; 9—Victor Rivera; 10—Dominic DeNucci.

AWA RATINGS: 1—Verne Gagne; 2—Billy Robinson; 3—Nick Bockwinkel; 4—Boris Breshnikov; 5—Dusty Rhodes; 6—Ivan Putski; 7—Baron Von Raschke; 8—Horst Hoffman; 9—Greg Gagne; 10—Jim Brunzell.

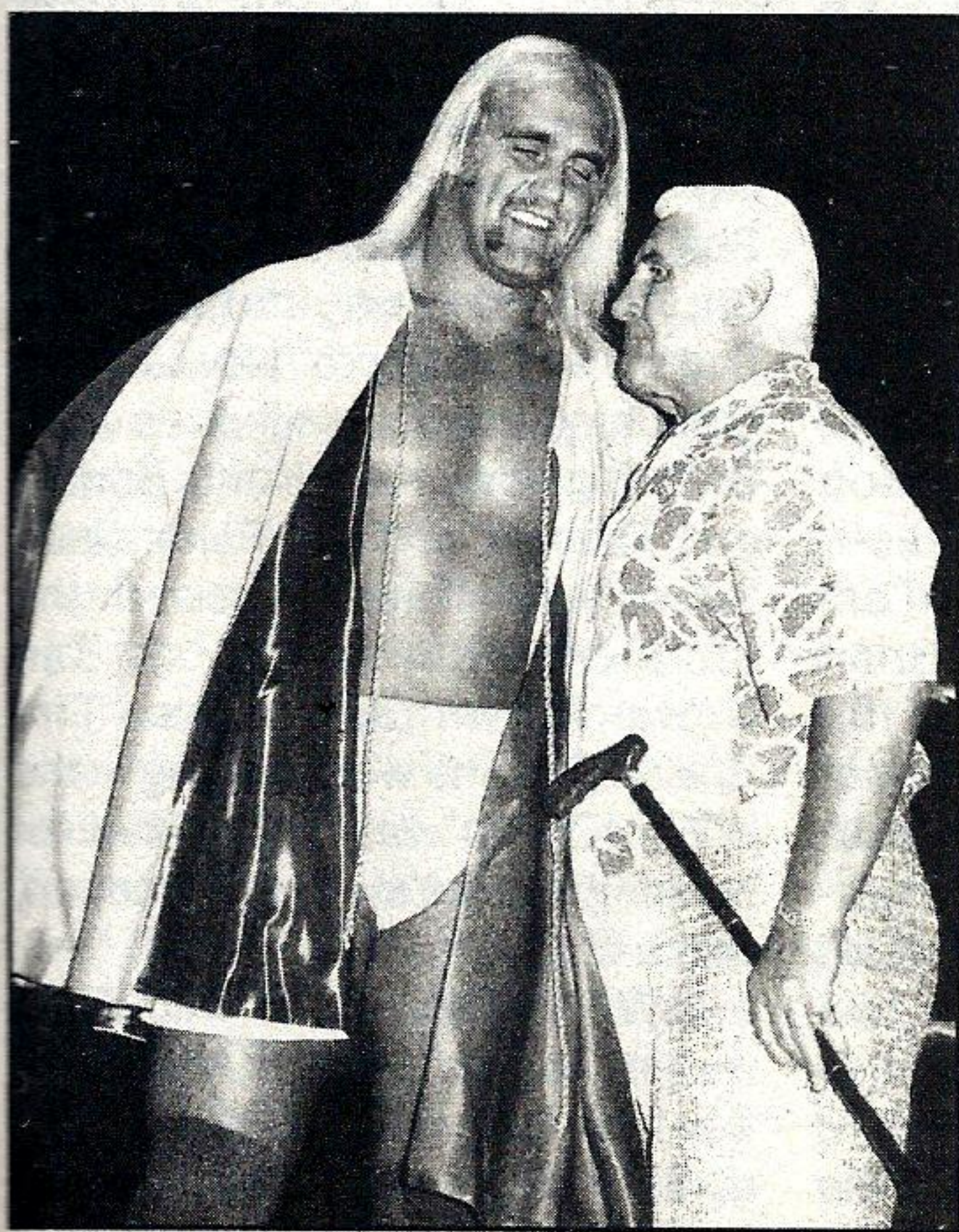
TAG TEAM RATINGS: 1—Dominic DeNucci & Victor Rivera; 2—Nick Bockwinkel & Ray Stevens; 3—Gene & Ole Anderson; 4—The Mongols; 5—The Blackjacks; 6—Harley Race & Roger Kirby; 7—Black Gordman & Goliath; 8—El Gran Markus & The Baron; 9—Johnny & Jimmy Valiant; 10—Jim Golden & Tojo Yamamoto.



Waldo Von Erich used an array of instruments to cut Bruno Sammartino during their 1975 bout. Von Erich stopped "The Living Legend" on cuts.

MAY/JUNE
1980

UNITED STATES CHAMPION Jimmy Snuka continued to tear up the Mid-Atlantic area under the management of Gene Anderson. "I've got the brains to keep Jimmy on the top of the heap," Anderson said ... "Classy" Fred Blassie brought his giant rule-breaking charge, Hulk Hogan, into the World Wrestling Federation and demanded a title shot against Bob Backlund. "Hogan'll mop the floor with that goofy geek," bragged Blassie ... Missouri State champion Kevin Von Erich successfully defended his title against former NWA champion Jack Brisco ... Andre the Giant and Bruiser were the last two men left in a 16-man battle royal in St. Louis. Instead of wrestling each other, the two friends decided to split the prize money and donate it to charity ... Mil Mascaras and Wahoo McDaniel teamed in Texas and were considering keeping the team together full-time ... Mike Graham won the International junior heavyweight championship from Tatsumi



Freddie Blassie introduced his latest protege, Hulk Hogan, to the WWF in 1980. Hogan's sole purpose in the WWF was to defeat World champ Bob Backlund.



In what would be called a cruiserweight showdown today, Mike Graham defeated Japan's Tatsumi Fujinami to win the International junior heavyweight title in 1980.

Fujinami ... "Flying Frenchman" Edouard Carpentier began wrestling again in Canada ... Mr. Wrestling II and Baron Von Raschke were embroiled in a feud in Georgia. He said in a press conference that there is "no room in a great state like Georgia for animals like Von Raschke."

NWA RATINGS: 1—Harley Race; 2—Andre the Giant; 3—Dusty Rhodes; 4—Jimmy Snuka; 5—Kevin Von Erich; 6—Mr. Wrestling II; 7—Jim Brunzell; 8—Mil Mascaras; 9—Mark Lewin; 10—Ric Flair.

WWF RATINGS: 1—Bob Backlund; 2—Ken Patera; 3—Hulk Hogan; 4—Pat Patterson; 5—Larry Zbyszko; 6—Ivan Putski; 7—Tony Atlas; 8—Samoan Afa; 9—Tito Santana; 10—Bobby Duncum.

AWA RATINGS: 1—Nick Bockwinkel; 2—Crusher; 3—Verne Gagne; 4—Greg Gagne; 5—Dino Bravo; 6—Mad Dog Vachon; 7—Billy Robinson; 8—Super Destroyer; 9—Jesse Ventura; 10—Crush-

er Blackwell.

TAG TEAM RATINGS: 1—Verne Gagne & Mad Dog Vachon; 2—Rick Steamboat & Jay Youngblood; 3—The Samoans; 4—Ivan Putski & Tito Santana; 5—Bryan St. John & Stan Lane; 6—Ray Stevens & Greg Valentine; 7—Ivan Koloff & Alexis Smirnoff; 8—Mr. Hito & Mr. Sakurada; 9—The Twin Devils; 10—Tommy & Eddie Gilbert.

MAY/JUNE
1985

IN THE SECOND annual David Von Erich Memorial Parade of Champions on May 5 at Texas Stadium, Kevin Von Erich wrestled Ric Flair for the NWA World title.

The match ended in a double-countout. Kevin also won a Lincoln Continental by scoring the pin for his team in a two-ring, 12-man tag team match, but Gino Hernandez and Chris Adams smashed the car's windshield with a chain. Also on the card, The Fantastics defeated The Midnight Express to win the vacant World Class tag team title ... With an assist from Baby Doll, Black Bart won the National title from Ronnie Garvin on June 8 in Atlanta ... Barry Windham and Mike Rotundo regained the WWF World tag team belts from Nikolai Volkoff and The Iron Sheik on June 17 in Poughkeepsie, New York. Windham and Rotundo had lost the title at WrestleMania I ... Florida wrestler Jack Hart reached a milestone when he lost to Scott McGhee and ran his win-loss record to 0-100 ... Hercules Hernandez' victory over Hector Guerrero for the Florida title gave him both the Florida and Southern belts ... In Japan, Antonio Inoki defeated Hulk Hogan by countout, thereby successfully defending his IWGP title ... Sgt. Slaughter pinned Larry Zbyszko on June 21 to capture the Americas championship ... Bobby

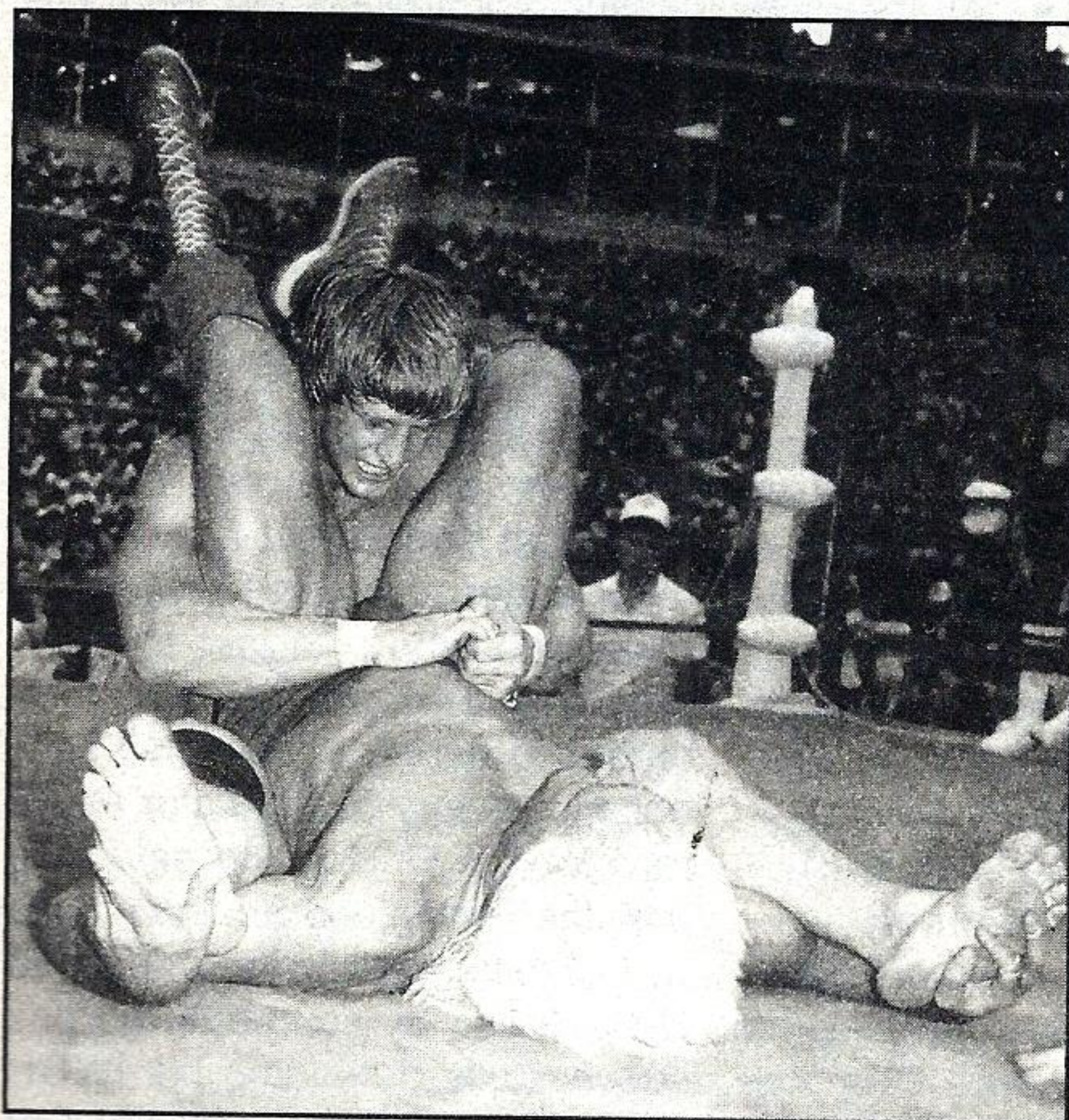
Heenan put a \$25,000 bounty on the head of Paul Orndorff.

NWA RATINGS: 1—Ric Flair; 2—Magnum T.A.; 3—Jerry Blackwell; 4—Dusty Rhodes; 5—Black Bart; 6—Nikita Koloff; 7—Chris Adams; 8—Kerry Von Erich; 9—Hercules Hernandez; 10—Gino Hernandez.

WWF RATINGS: 1—Hulk Hogan; 2—Greg Valentine; 3—Magnificent Muraco; 4—Rick Steamboat; 5—Paul Orndorff; 6—Junkyard Dog; 7—Tito Santana; 8—Roddy Piper; 9—John Studd; 10—Jimmy Snuka.

AWA RATINGS: 1—Rick Martel; 2—Sgt. Slaughter; 3—Michael Hayes; 4—Larry Zbyszko; 5—Nick Bockwinkel; 6—Butch Reed; 7—The Tonga Kid; 8—Jerry Blackwell; 9—Kamala; 10—Masked Superstar.

TAG TEAM RATINGS: 1—The Road Warriors; 2—Ivan & Nikita Koloff; 3—Barry Windham & Mike Rotundo; 4—Ted DiBiase & Steve Williams; 5—Chris Adams & Gino Hernandez; 6—Ole & Arn Anderson; 7—Rick Rude & Jesse Barr; 8—Rick Morton & Robert Gibson; 9—Nikolai Volkoff & The Iron Sheik; 10—Jonathan Boyd & Rip Morgan.



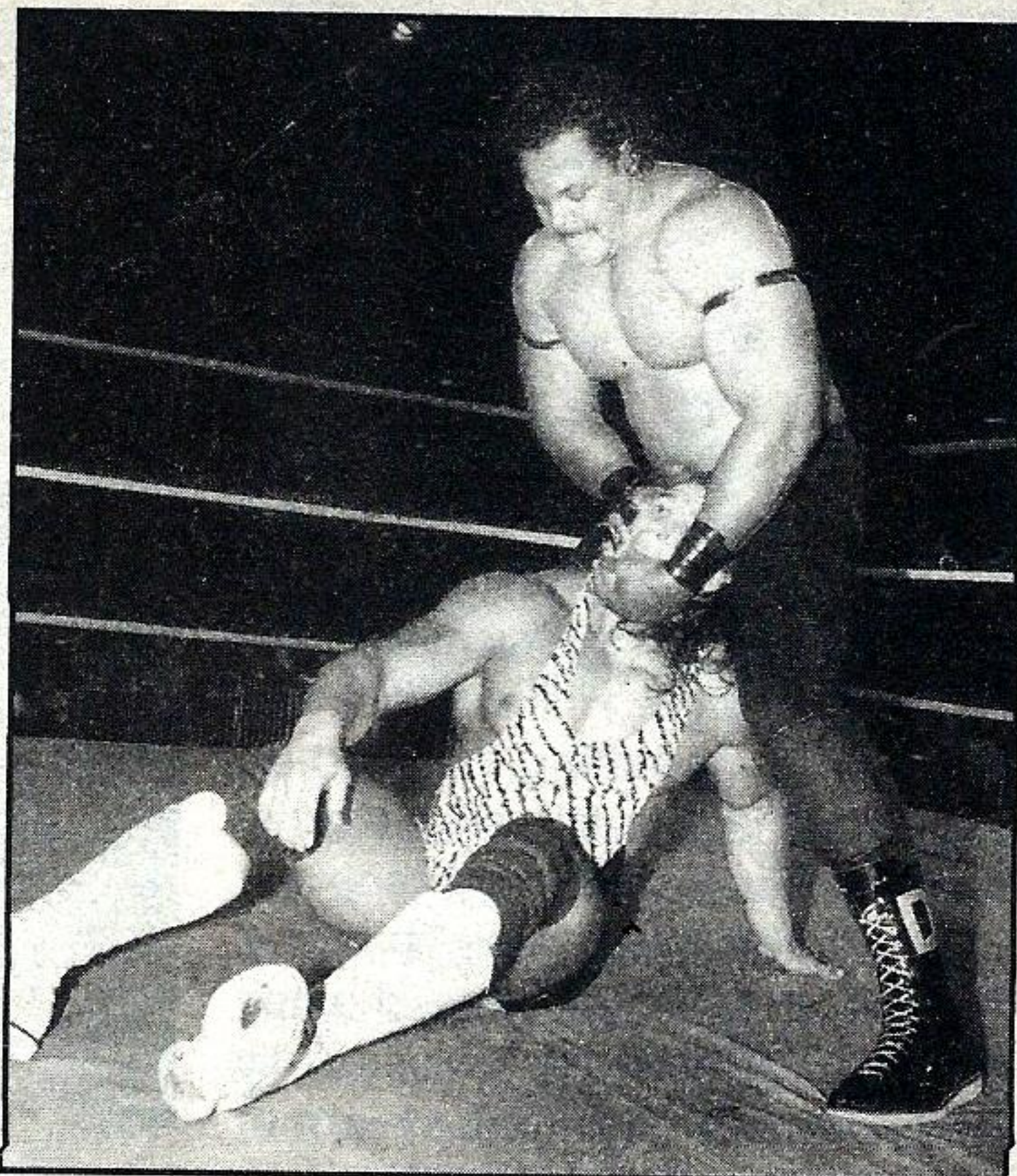
Kevin Von Erich came close to taking the NWA World title from Ric Flair at the second annual David Von Erich Parade of Champions, but the match ended in a double-countout.

MAY/JUNE 1990

JERRY LAWLER won his sixth USWA title from Jimmy Valiant in Memphis, Tennessee, on May 5. His reign ended a little more than a month later when he lost the title to The Snowman in Memphis. Former heavyweight boxing champion Leon Spinks was the guest referee ... Rex King and Steve Doll won the USWA tag team belts from Brickhouse Brown and Sweet Daddy Falcone on May 21, but were stripped of the title when they failed to show

up for a scheduled match ... Paul E. Dangerously entered the NWA as a color commentator ... Larry Zbyszko was one month into his AWA World title reign. He would be the last World champion for the federation, which ceased operations in early-1991 ... Butch Reed and Ron Simmons—Doom—defeated Scott and Rick Steiner for

the NWA World tag team belts on May 19 in Washington, D.C. ... On the same card, The Midnight Express—Bobby Eaton and Stan Lane—defeated Tom Zenk and Brian Pillman for the U.S. tag team title ... A rare event in wrestling occurred on May 5, as two world championships were defended on the same card in St. Paul, Minnesota. NWA World champion Ric



Before he was Faarooq, Ron Simmons collected a number of titles in WCW, including the World tag team championship he and Butch Reed won from the Steiners in 1990.

Flair pinned Brian Pillman; AWA World champion Larry Zbyszko lost to Nikita Koloff by disqualification. Nick Bockwinkel served as special referee for both matches ... Long-time Texas ring announcer and commentator Mark Lowrance shut off his microphone after many years and retired to be a Methodist minister ... The Road Warriors debuted in the WWF in late-June ... A second Monster Factory training school was opened by Larry Sharpe and Charlie Fulton in Marion, Ohio. The original Monster Factory in Paulsboro, New Jersey, graduated such wrestlers as Bam Bam Bigelow, King Kong Bundy, and Tatanka ... Terry Funk joined Sylvester Stallone to assist in the production of *Rocky V* ... Bad News Brown and Jake "The Snake" Roberts were feuding in the WWF. Brown was suspended for smashing Jake's snake, Damien, with a chair.

NWA RATINGS: 1—Ric Flair; 2—Lex Luger; 3—Arn Anderson; 4—Junkyard Dog; 5—Paul Orndorff; 6—Barry Windham; 7—Doug Furnas; 8—Tommy Rich; 9—Norman; 10—Mark Callous.

AWA RATINGS: 1—Larry Zbyszko; 2—Nikita Koloff; 3—

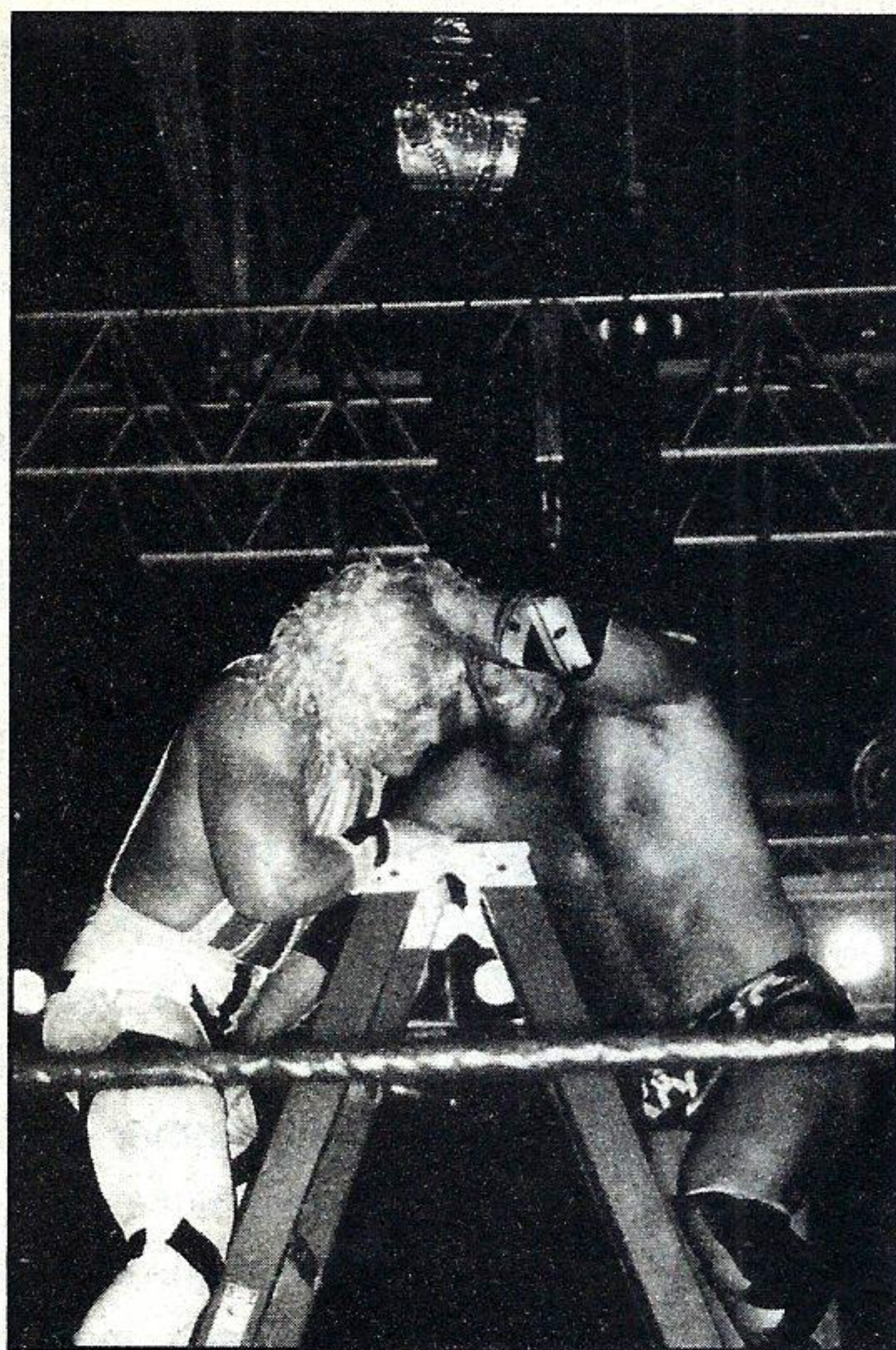
Baron Von Raschke; 4—The Trooper; 5—D.J. Peterson; 6—Sgt. Slaughter; 7—Col. DeBeers; 8—John Nord; 9—Mike George; 10—Brad Rheingans.

WWF RATINGS: 1—The Ultimate Warrior; 2—Curt Hennig; 3—Rick Rude; 4—Earthquake; 5—Brutus Beefcake; 6—Big Bossman; 7—Randy Savage; 8—Dusty Rhodes; 9—Jake Roberts; 10—Dino Bravo.

TAG TEAM RATINGS: 1—Doom; 2—The Rock 'n' Roll Express; 3—Demolition; 4—The Midnight Express; 5—The Hart Foundation; 6—Rick & Scott Steiner; 7—The Rockers; 8—Tracey Smothers & Steve Armstrong; 9—Tony Anthony & Tom Burton; 10—Beetlejuice & Big Juice.

MAY/JUNE 1995

THE SHEIK, STILL semi-active at age 70, suffered a heart attack while getting in to a taxi in Tokyo. He made a full recovery ... The Grand Wizard, Fabulous Moolah, Antonino Rocca, Ivan Putski, George Steele, Pedro Morales, and Ernie Ladd were inducted into the WWF Hall of Fame on June 24 ... FMW's Atsushi Onita announced his retirement on May 5 after beating Hayabusa at Kawasaki Stadium. Onita would later return and announce his retirement again, earning him the nickname "Mr. Liar" from Japanese fans ... The feud between Razor Ramon (Scott Hall) and Jeff Jarrett for the WWF Intercontinental title came to a head during the WWF's Canadian tour. Ramon beat Jarrett for the title on May 19, but Jarrett recaptured the belt on May 22 ... A similar feud in WCW between Harlem Heat and The Nasty Boys heated up on June 24 when Heat took their belts back from Jerry Sags and Brian Knobs ... Toshiaki Kawada and Akira Taue beat Mitsuharu Misawa and Kenta Kobashi to win All-Japan's Unified



Razor Ramon and Jeff Jarrett took their WWF I-C title feud to new heights in 1995. After battling each other for months, these guys traded the title twice in the span of a week.

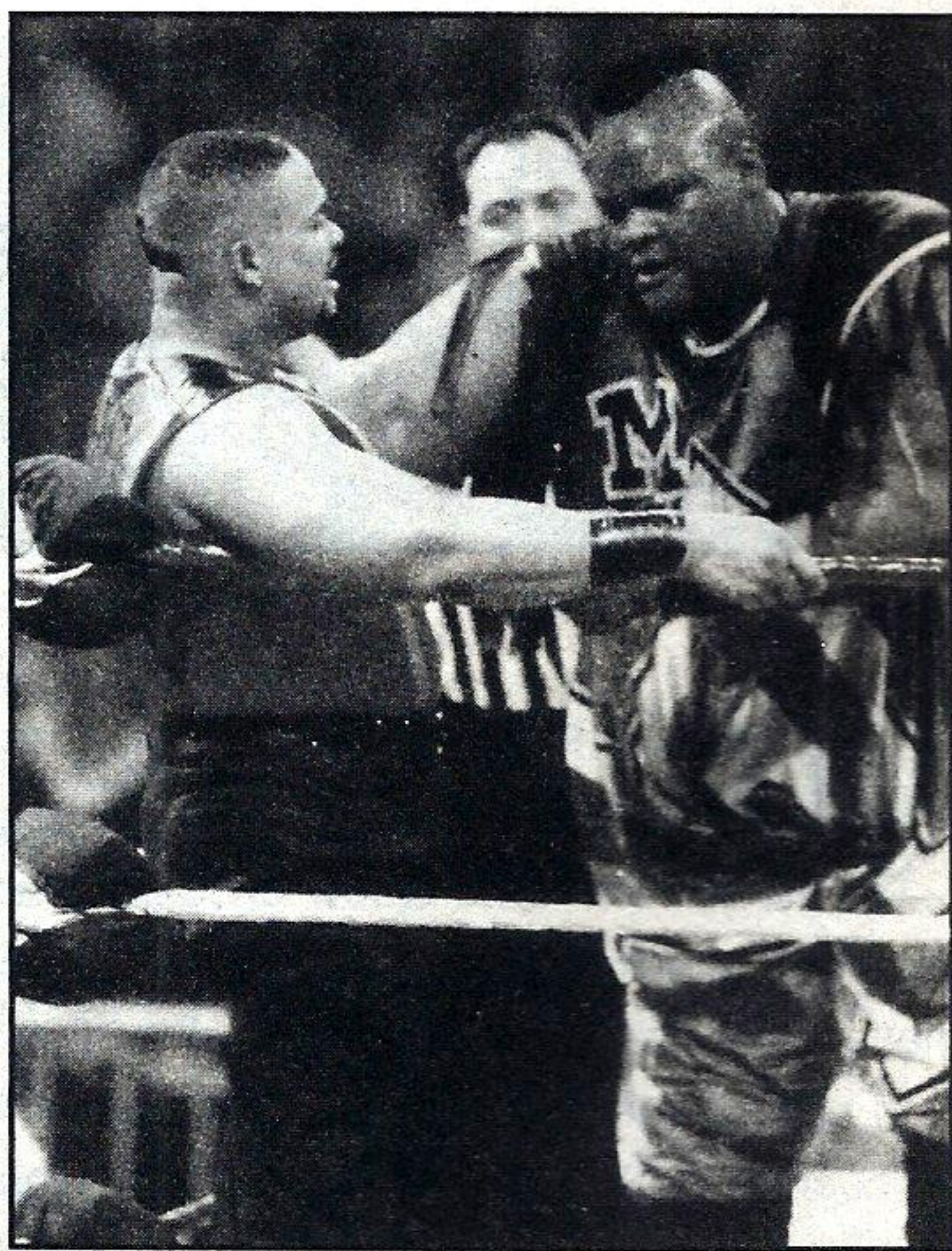
tag team title when Kawada pinned Misawa for the first time ever at 42:37. The match was a consensus Japanese Tag Team Match of the Year ... The Renegade scored a stunning victory over Arn Anderson to capture the WCW TV title on June 18 ... Raven and Stevie Richards captured the ECW tag title from Public Enemy on June 20 ... Boston Garden hosted its last pro wrestling card ever, the WWF's "A Night To Remember," on May 13 ... Chris Benoit won New Japan's annual Super Juniors round-robin tournament by beating Shinjiro Otani in Hiroshima on June 13 ... Mabel (Viscera) pinned Savio Vega in the finals of the WWF's King of the Ring tournament to win the crown. On the same card, Bret Hart defeated Jerry Lawler by submission in a "kiss my foot" match.

WCW RATINGS: 1—Hulk Hogan; 2—Sting; 3—Arn Anderson; 4—Randy Savage; 5—Meng; 6—Vader; 7—Ric Flair; 8—Alex Wright; 9—Big Bubba Rogers; 10—Brian Pillman.

WWF RATINGS: 1—Diesel; 2—Jeff Jarrett; 3—Razor Ramon; 4—Bret Hart; 5—Bam Bam Bigelow; 6—Sid Vicious; 7—Man Mountain Rock; 8—The Undertaker; 9—Jean-Pierre Lafitte; 10—Bob Holly.

ECW RATINGS: 1—The Sandman; 2—Shane Douglas; 3—Cactus Jack; 4—Eddy Guerrero; 5—Dean Malenko; 6—Axl Rotten; 7—911; 8—Tasmaniac; 9—Marty Jannetty; 10—Tommy Dreamer.

TAG TEAM RATINGS: 1—The Nasty Boys; 2—Owen Hart & Yokozuna; 3—Lex Luger & Davey Boy Smith; 4—Al Snow & Unibomb; 5—Harlem Heat; 6—The Rock 'n' Roll Express; 7—Eli & Jacob Blu; 8—PG-13; 9—Public Enemy; 10—Techno Team 2000. □



Mabel (a.k.a. Viscera) bested Savio Vega in the final round of the 1995 King of the Ring—on the same card Bret Hart defeated Jerry Lawler in a "kiss my foot" match.

THE WRESTLING

BOOK

OF

LISTS

WE WERE ALL stunned back in January when we heard that David Letterman, host of *The Late Show* on CBS, had to have emergency quintuple bypass surgery. So many of us have been thoroughly entertained by Dave and his late night programs over the years, and we were glad to hear that although he would need at least a month or two to recuperate, he was expected to make a complete recovery.

Of course Dave's health was the most important thing, but once we were assured that he'd be fine, we started thinking about all those great top 10 lists we'd be missing while *The Late Show* was in reruns. No one comes up with more entertaining top 10 lists than the staff of *The Late Show*.

That got a few of the members of the editorial staff thinking. It had been five years since we last did a "Book Of Lists" in *THE WRESTLER*, and that was a lot of fun both to put together and to read. So why not do another one? The concept was definitely a good one, but could we pull it off? Actually, that was a moot question. We wouldn't be the ones pulling it off. You see, many of the lists you'll read starting on the next page were not products of the brains of the editorial staff.

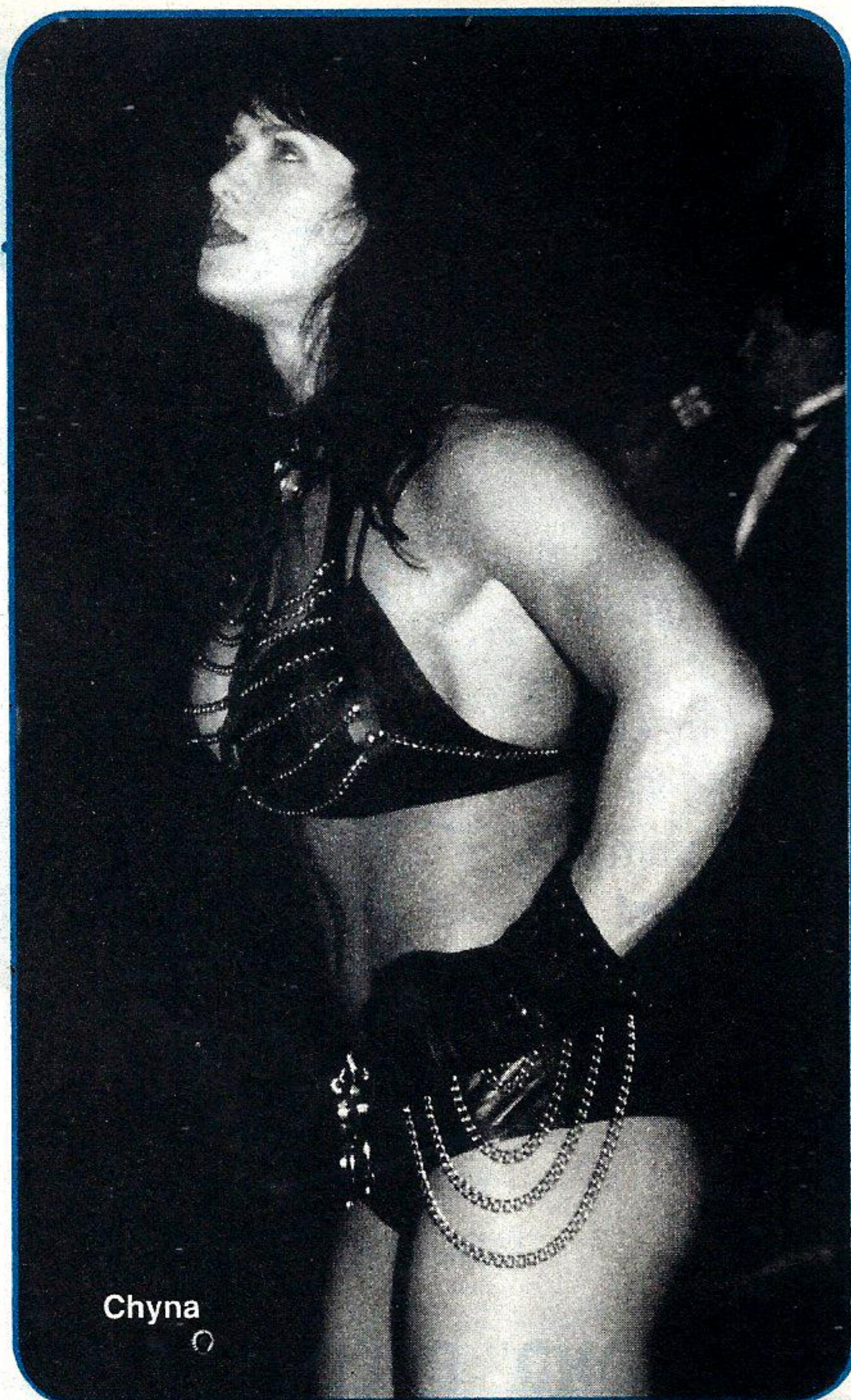
A lot of these lists came from the people involved in our great sport. We asked "Diamond" Dallas Page what his favorite 10 movies are (he's been in a few himself), we asked Chris Jericho what his 10 favorite bands are (his own band, Fozzy Osbourne, made the list), we asked Lance Storm for 10 things that make him proud to be a Canadian (is there a more proud Canadian than Lance Storm?), and we ... well, you get the idea.

In addition to entertaining you with these types of lists, we were trying to give you a little more insight into the people you watch on TV and in the arenas. Some of the lists, however, did come from us. After all, we couldn't ask Kurt Angle what "I" words other than intensity, integrity, and intelligence would apply to him, could we? Likewise, it would have been difficult to ask someone in power at WCW to give us 10 ways to make the federation better.

But these are the kinds of lists we came up with. We think they're pretty good and rather insightful. Let us know what you think. Maybe you could even come up with your Top 10 Top 10 Lists in the June 2000 issue of *THE WRESTLER*!

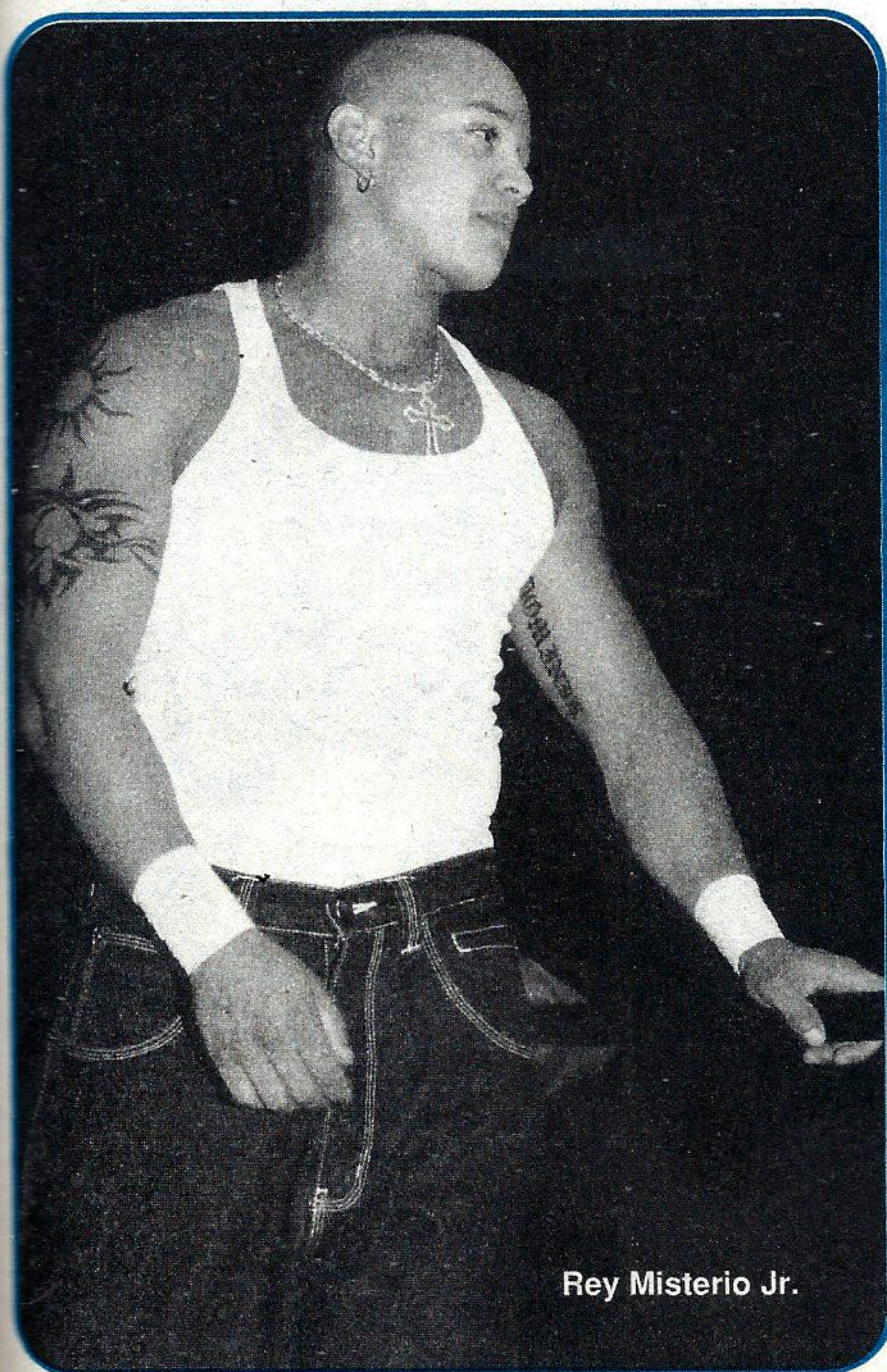
10 WOMEN WE'D LIKE TO SEE CHYNA WRESTLE

1. Stephanie McMahon-Helmsley
2. Lucy Lawless (Xena)
3. Asya
4. Rosie O'Donnell
5. Bull Nakano
6. Nicole Bass
7. Midnight
8. Roseanne
9. Jazz
10. Aja Kong



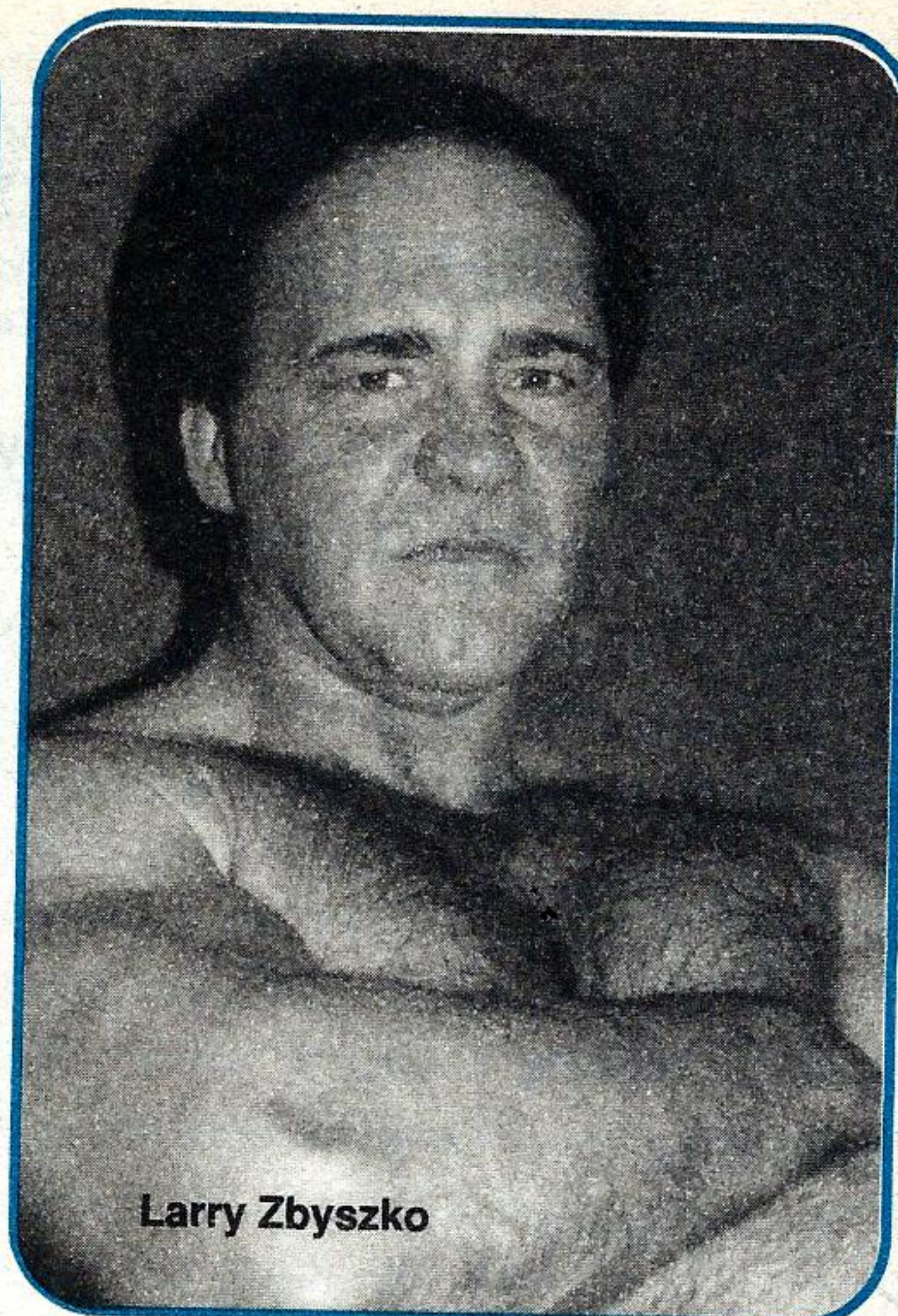
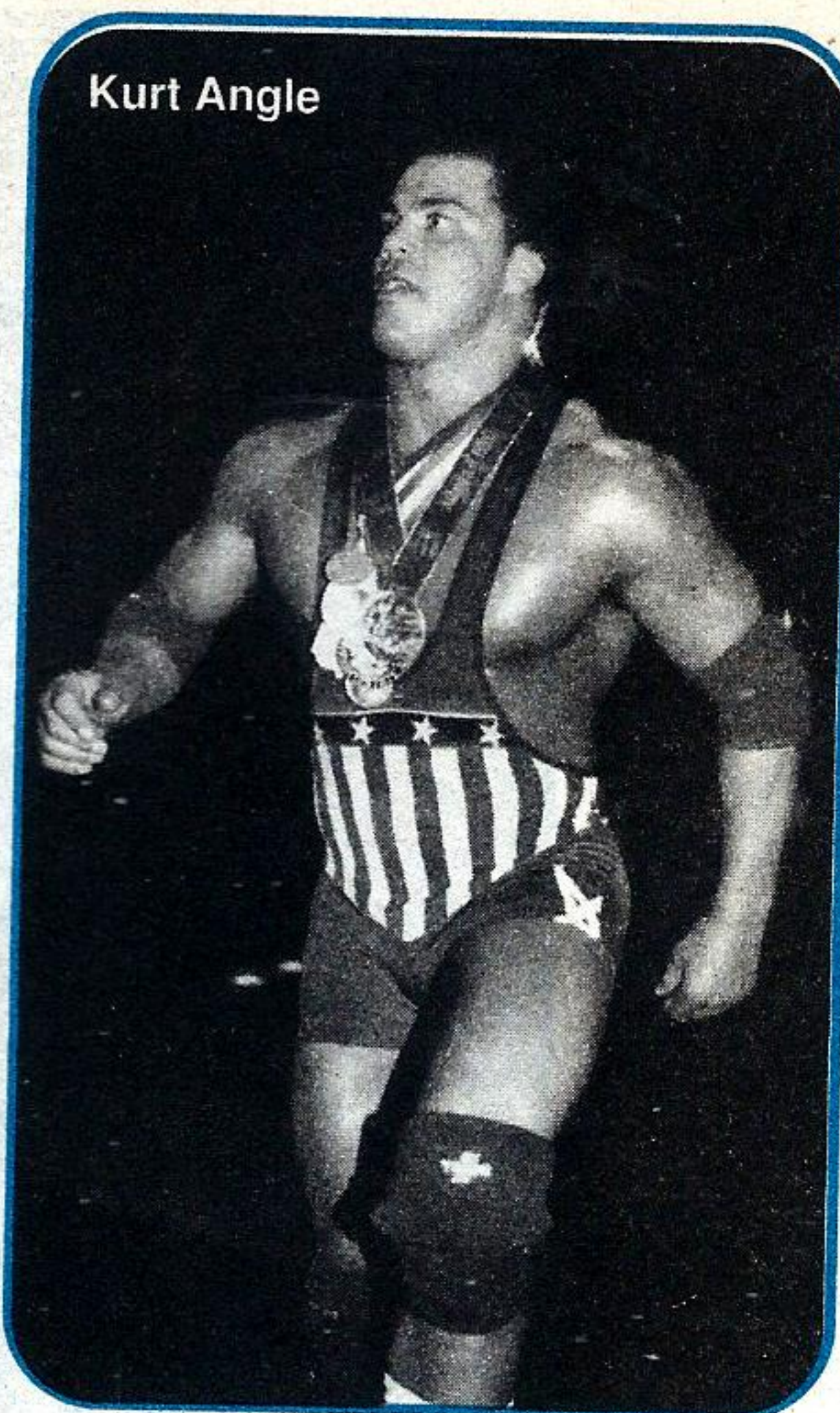
REY MISTERIO JR.'S FAVORITE UNDERSIZED ATHLETES

1. Juventud Guerrera
2. Spud Webb
3. Mugsy Bogues
4. Willie Shoemaker
5. Sky Low Low
6. Theoren Fleury
7. Doug Flutie
8. Freddie Patek
9. John Cangielosi
10. Rey Misterio Jr.



10 OTHER "I" WORDS THAT APPLY TO KURT ANGLE

1. Ignorant
2. Insufferable
3. Immature
4. Insidious
5. Insincere
6. Inane
7. Inflammatory
8. Insolent
9. Insulting
10. Irritating



"DIAMOND" DALLAS PAGE'S 10 FAVORITE MOVIES

1. *Tombstone*
2. *It's A Wonderful Life*
3. *Christmas Vacation*
4. *Scarface*
5. *Scent Of A Woman*
6. *Alien II*
7. *Star Trek II: The Wrath Of Khan*
8. *The Matrix*
9. *Casablanca*
10. *The Outlaw Josey Wales*

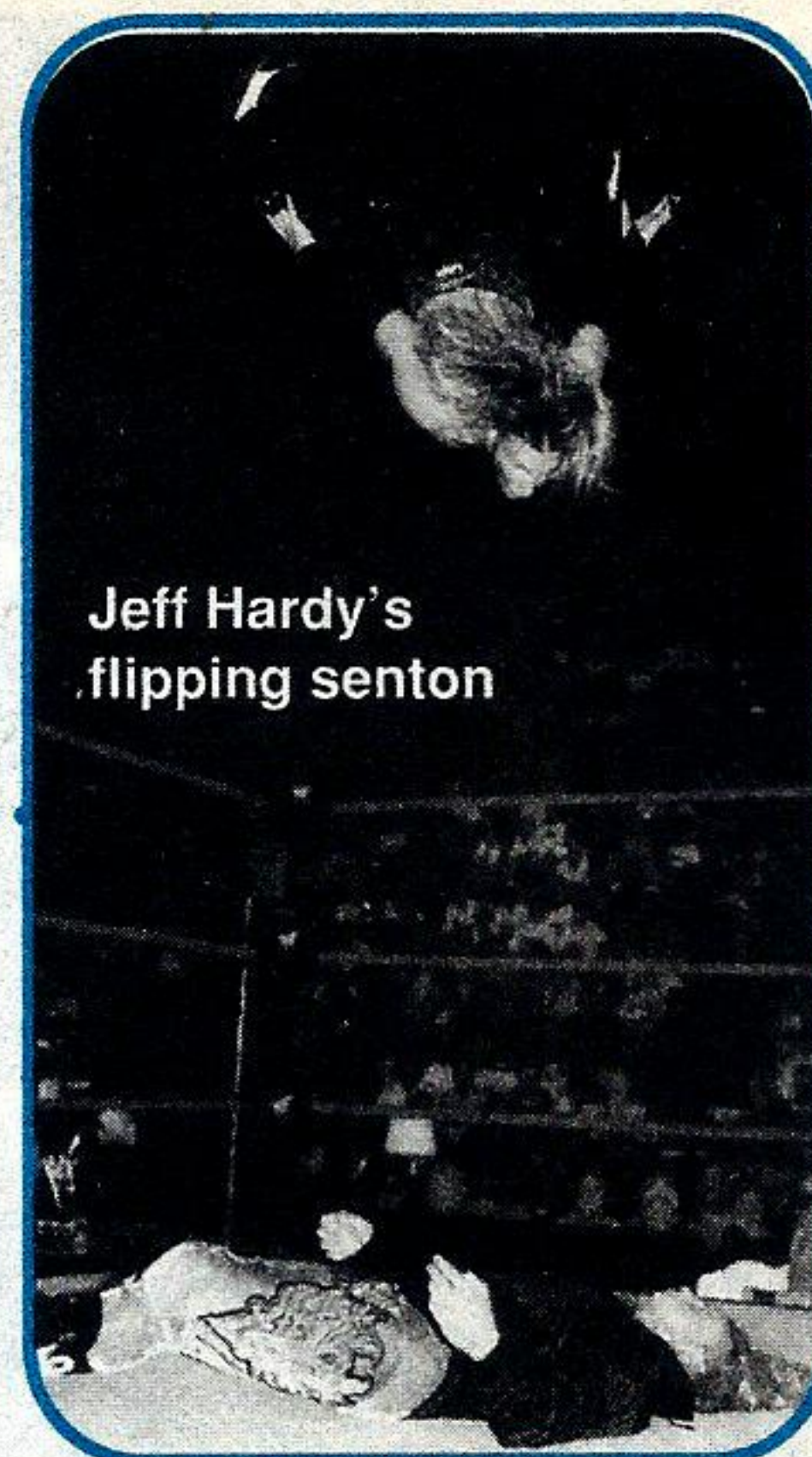


LARRY ZBYSZKO'S 10 FAVORITE GOLF COURSES

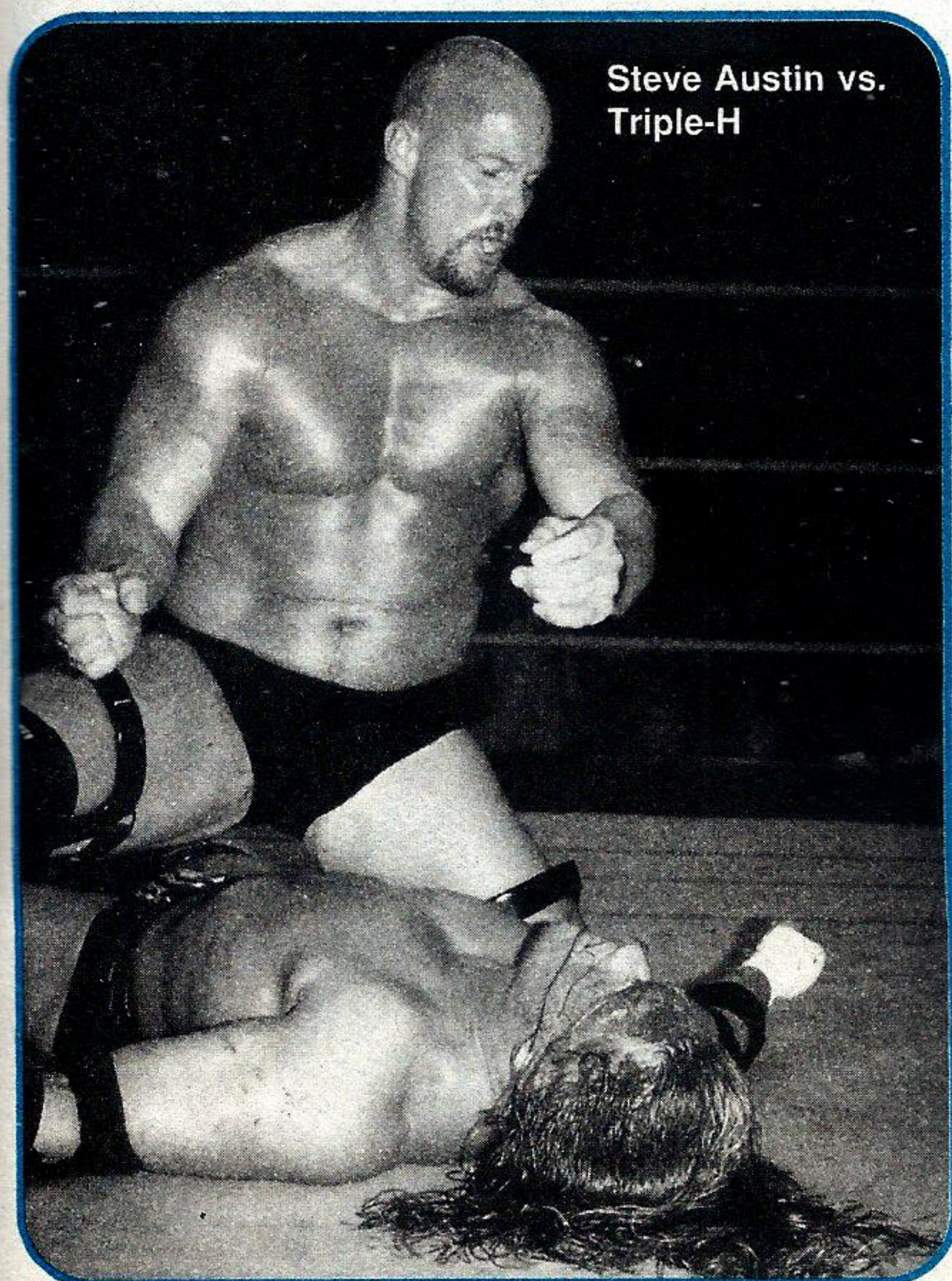
1. Oakmont (Oakmont, Pennsylvania)
2. Doral (Miami, Florida)
3. Augusta National (Augusta, Georgia)
4. Harbortown (Hilton Head, South Carolina)
5. Sawgrass (Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida)
6. Royal Troon (Troon, Scotland)
7. Pebble Beach (Pebble Beach, California)
8. Royal St. Andrews (St. Andrews, Scotland)
9. Inverness (Toledo, Ohio)
10. Turnberry (Turnberry, Scotland)

THE 10 MOVES WITH THE MOST POTENTIAL TO CRIPPLE

1. Jeff Hardy's flipping senton
2. Space flying tigerdrop
3. Star dust press
4. Asai moonsault
5. Twisting plancha
6. Bradshaw's clothesline from hell
7. Shooting star press
8. Release tiger suplex
9. Tombstone piledriver
10. Top-rope power bomb



Jeff Hardy's
flipping senton



Steve Austin vs.
Triple-H

STEVE AUSTIN'S 10 FAVORITE TOUGH GUYS

1. Bruiser Brody
2. James Dean
3. Dick Butkus
4. George Foreman
5. Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf
6. Clint Eastwood
7. John Wayne
8. Billy Martin
9. Dick the Bruiser
10. Fritz Von Erich



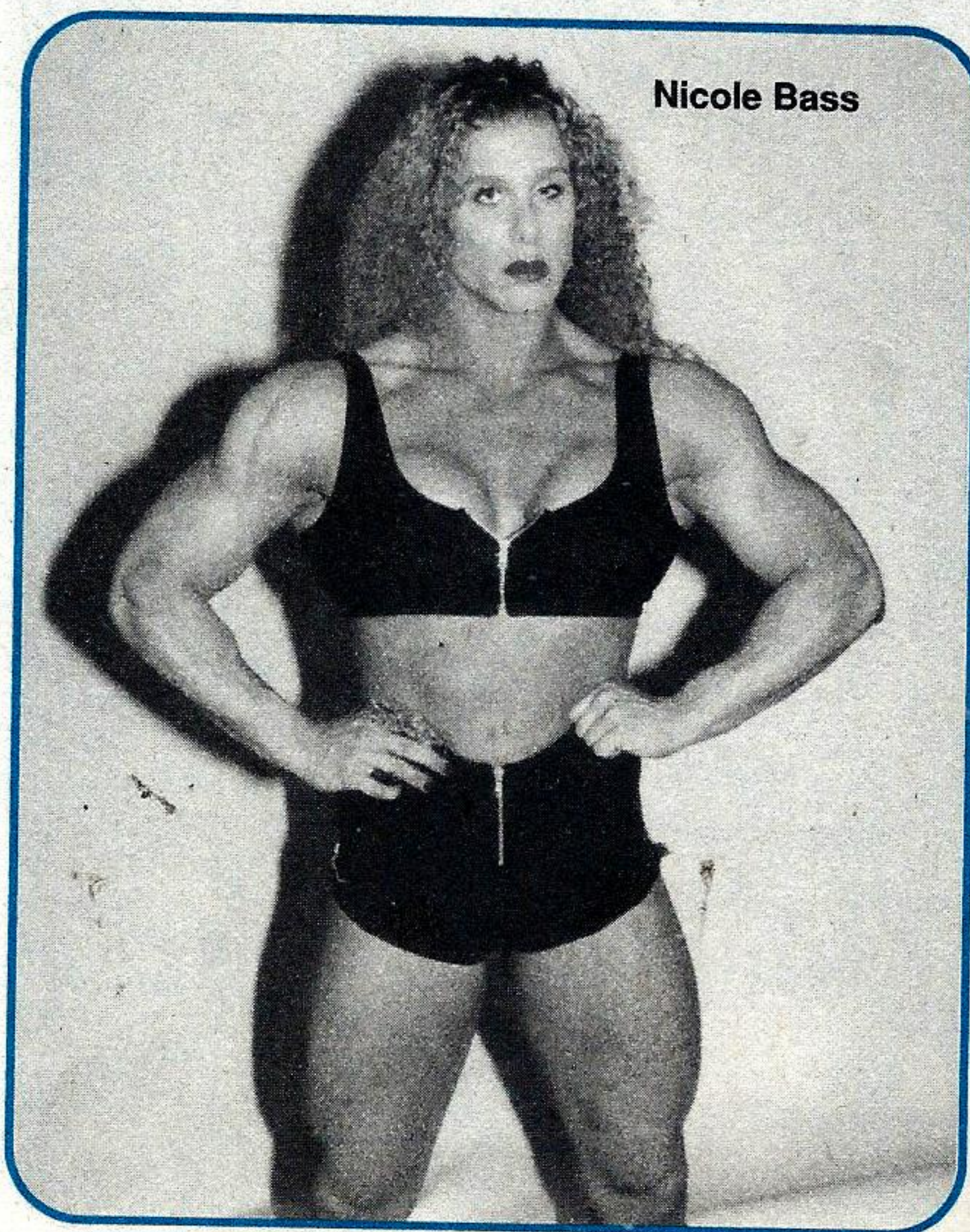
Shaquille O'Neal (with Hulk Hogan and Jimmy Hart)

10 MAINSTREAM ATHLETES WHO COULD WRESTLE FOR A LIVING

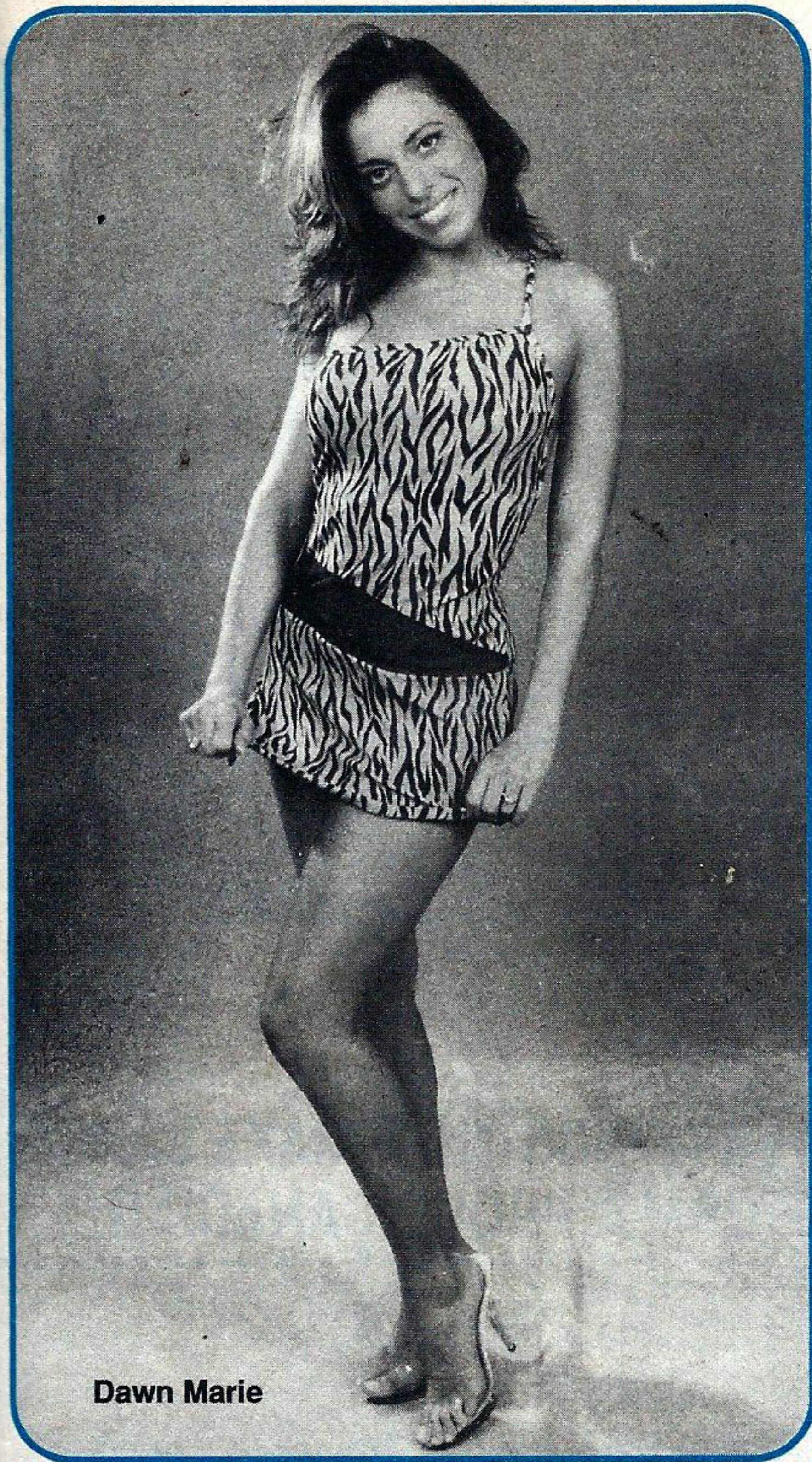
1. Shaquille O'Neal
2. Tie Domi
3. Warren Sapp
4. Andrew Golota
5. Jon Randle
6. Charles Barkley
7. John Rocker
8. Brandi Chastain
9. Gabrielle Reece
10. Mark McGwire

DAWN MARIE'S 10 FAVORITE PLACES TO SHOP

1. Sonya's (my costume lady)
2. Zara International
3. Any shoe store (Nine West or Kenneth Cole)
4. BeBe
5. Makeup counter
6. B. Dalton—preferably one with a cafe (so I can sit and read and drink juice)
7. Anywhere in Amish country in Pennsylvania where you can buy homemade goods
8. Victoria's Secret
9. Any good jewelry store
10. Sports Authority



Nicole Bass



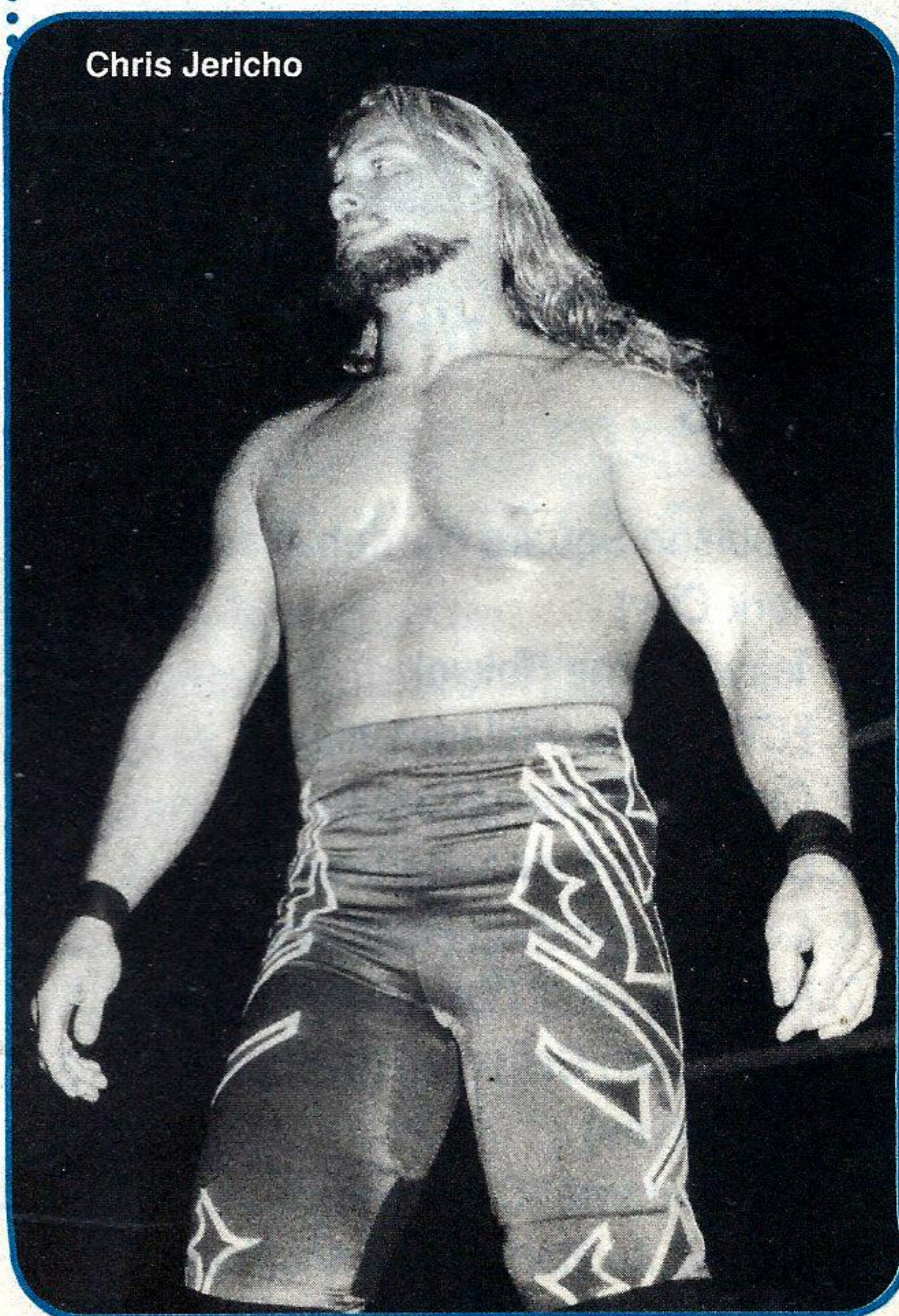
Dawn Marie

CHRIS JERICO'S 10 FAVORITE BANDS

1. Dream Theater
2. Metallica
3. Helloween
4. Iron Maiden
5. Alice In Chains
6. Ozzy Osbourne
7. Fozzy Osbourne (his own band)
8. Annihilator
9. Wildness
10. Blind Guardian

NICOLE BASS MEMORIAL LIST OF WOMEN WHO LOOK LIKE MEN

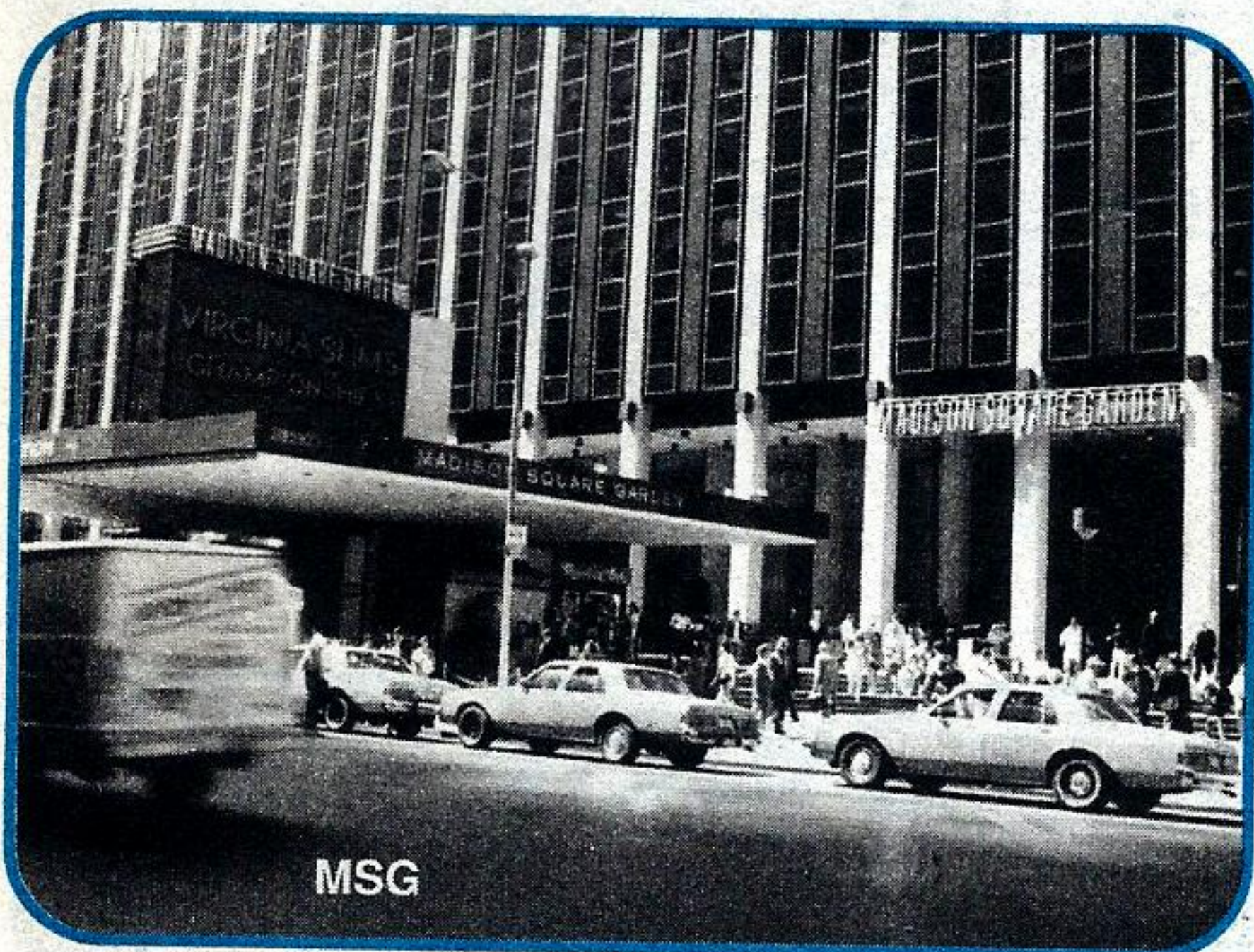
1. Linda Tripp
2. Janet Reno
3. Barbara Bush
4. Reggie Bennett
5. Linda Hunt



Chris Jericho

JUSTIN CREDIBLE'S BALD AND BEAUTIFUL (AND, YES, THIS IS THE LIST HE GAVE US!)

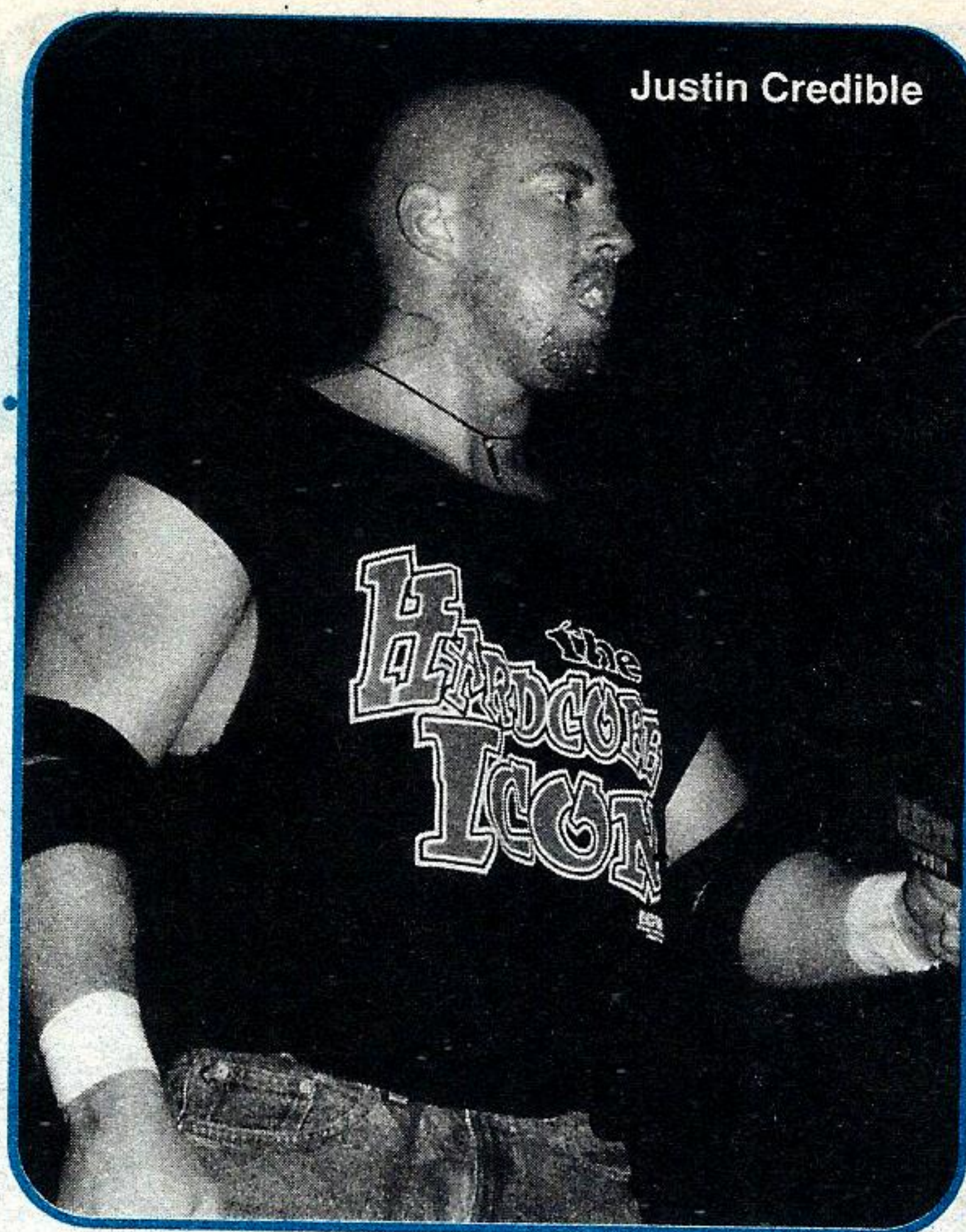
1. Elvis Presley
2. Shawn Michaels
3. Gene Simmons
4. Harrison Ford
5. Brian May (from the band Queen)



THE 10 BEST WRESTLING VENUES

1. Madison Square Garden (New York City)
2. Tokyo Dome (Tokyo)
3. ECW Arena (Philadelphia)
4. Georgia Dome (Atlanta)
5. Baltimore Arena (Baltimore)
6. Cow Palace (San Francisco)
7. Korakuen Hall (Tokyo)
8. Mid-South Coliseum (Memphis, Tennessee)
9. Saddledome (Calgary)
10. Olympic Auditorium (Los Angeles)

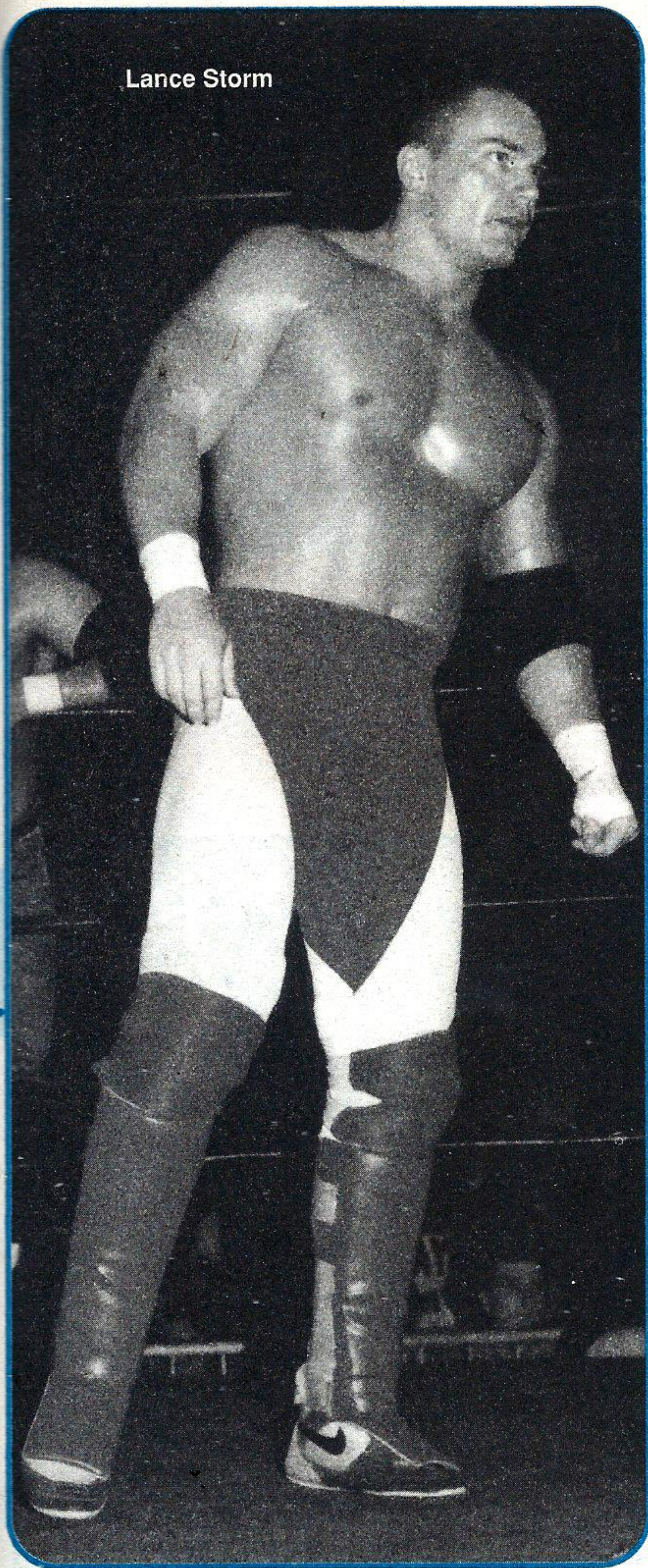
Justin Credible



10 THINGS THAT MAKE LANCE STORM A PROUD CANADIAN

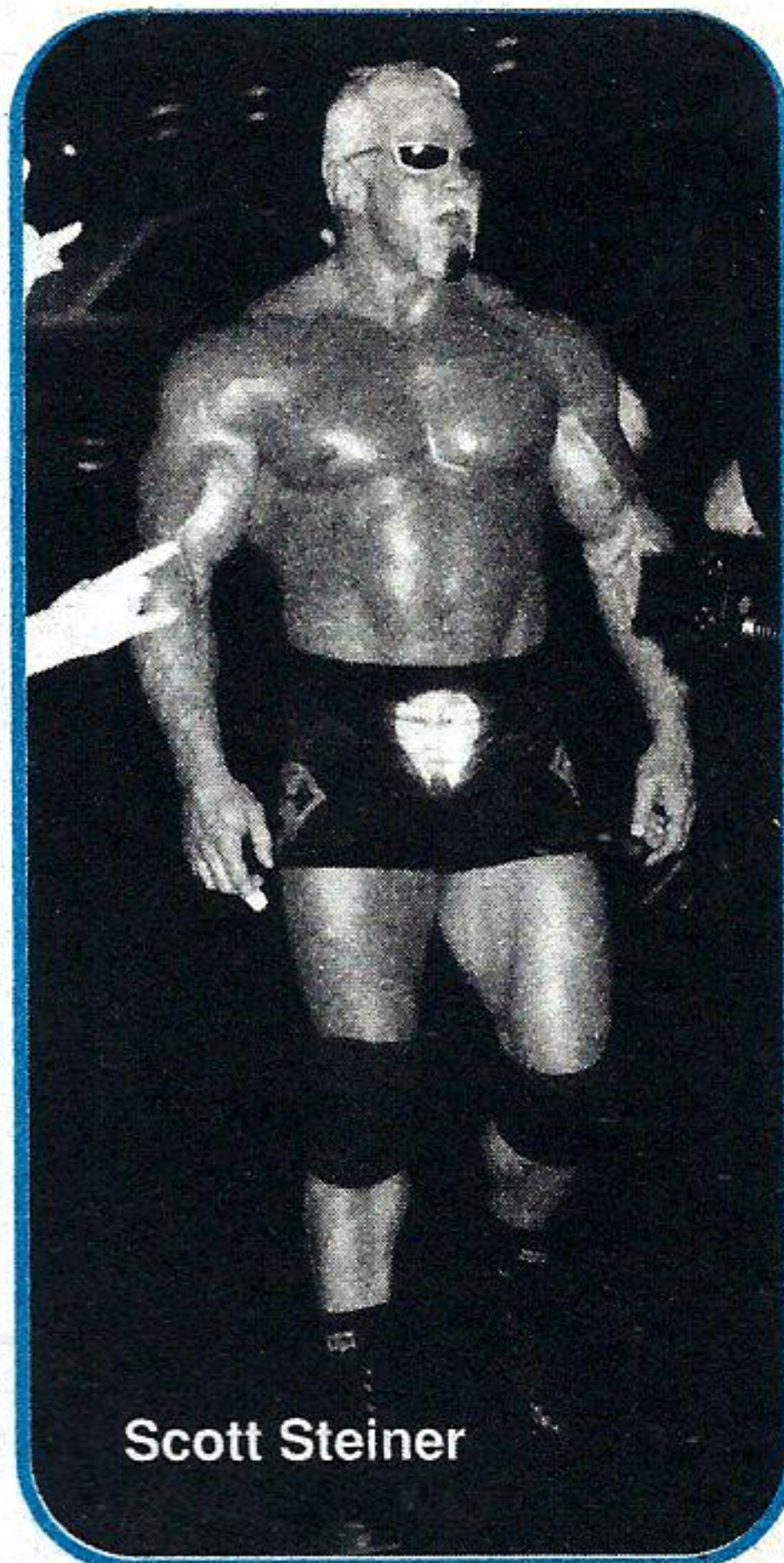
1. Canada is not part of the United States
2. Stu Hart-the best trainer this business has ever known-makes his home in Calgary ... Alberta ... Canada
3. All the finest beers are brewed in Canada
4. No Canadian prime minister was ever caught in a compromising position with an intern
5. A real man's sport-ice hockey-is the national pastime
6. The Canadian side of Niagara Falls is a lot cleaner and a lot nicer than the U.S. side
7. The Mounties always get their man
8. Our cities don't shut down when an inch of snow falls

Lance Storm



FIVE WCW WRESTLERS WHO WOULD LOOK GOOD IN THE WWF RIGHT NOW

1. Scott Steiner
2. Ric Flair
3. Jeff Jarrett
4. Bill Goldberg
5. Norman Smiley



Scott Steiner

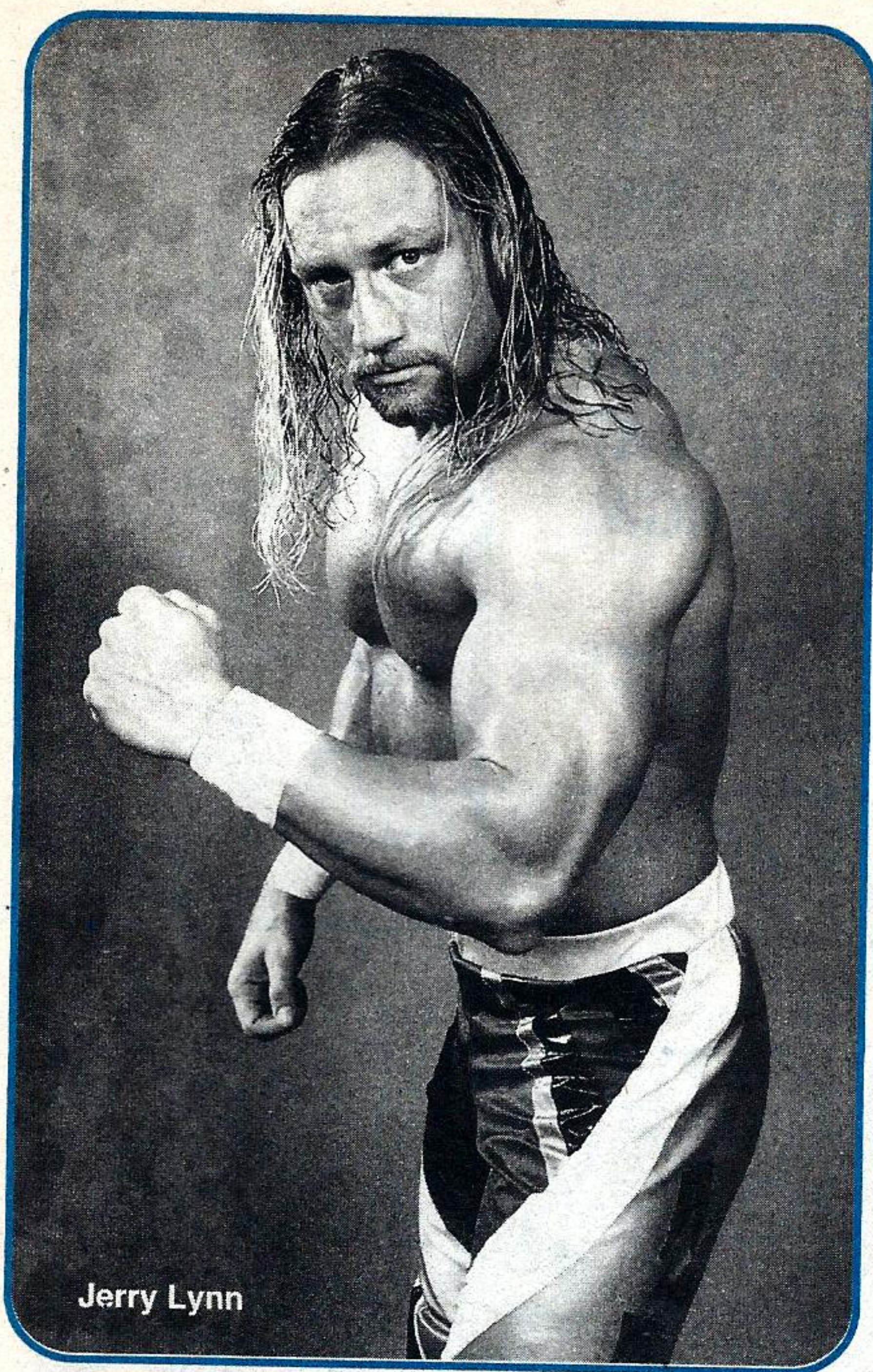
Steve Corino



STEVE CORINO'S 10 FAVORITE OLD-SCHOOL WRESTLERS

1. Tully Blanchard
2. Tommy "Wildfire" Rich
3. Jack Victory
4. Jerry Lawler
5. Arn Anderson
6. Masked Superstar
7. John Tatum
8. Eddie Gilbert
9. Nick Bockwinkel
10. Roddy Piper

9. Every other country in the world doesn't hate Canada (unlike a certain other North American nation)
10. Canadians have no problem learning two languages



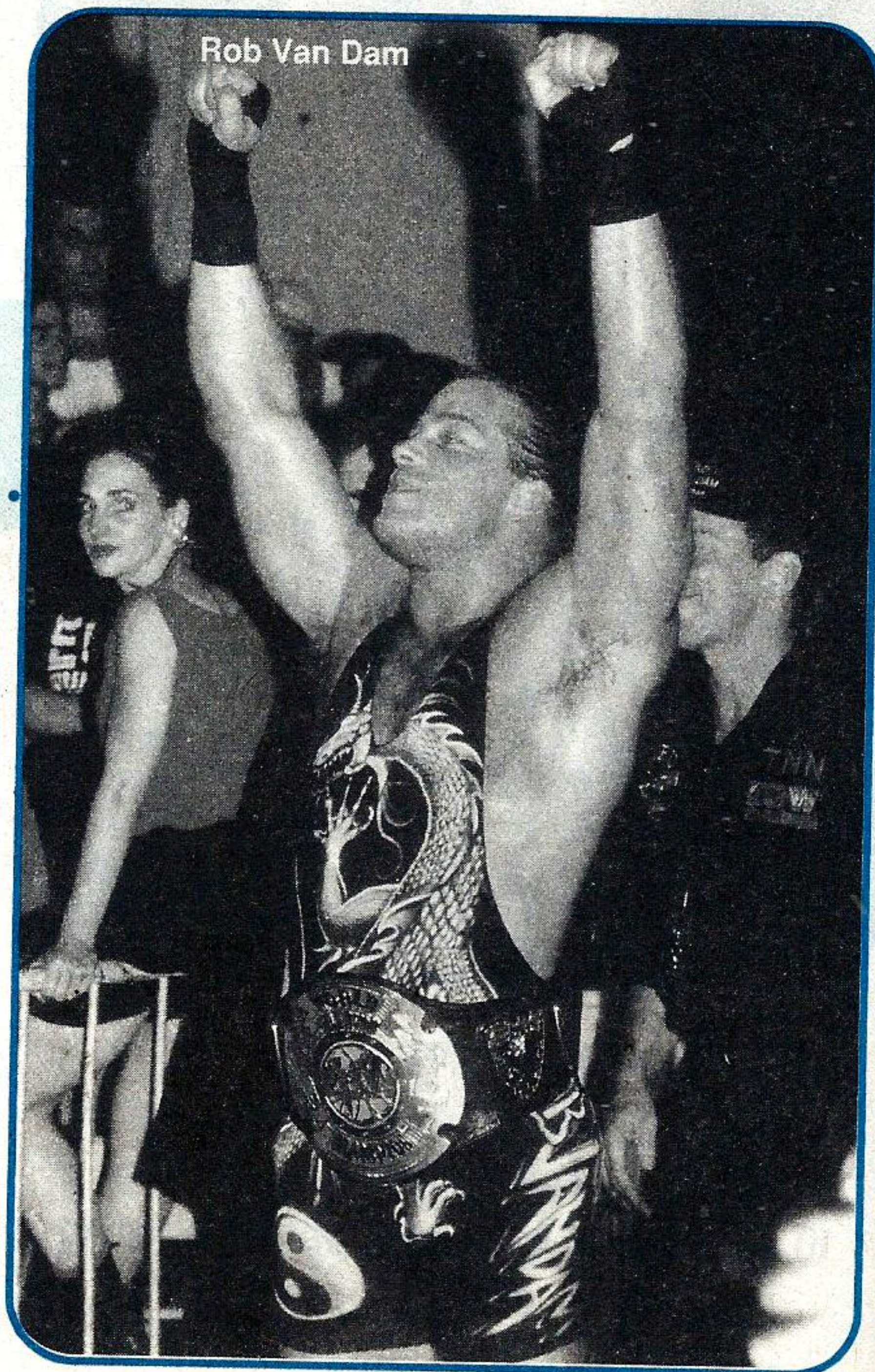
Jerry Lynn

10 MOST HUMBLE PEOPLE IN WRESTLING

1. Jerry Lynn
2. Hacksaw Duggan
3. Chris Benoit
4. Mick Foley
5. Tommy Dreamer
6. Booker T
7. Dean Malenko
8. Christian
9. The Hardy Boyz
10. Spike Dudley

THE 10 MOST ARROGANT PEOPLE IN WRESTLING

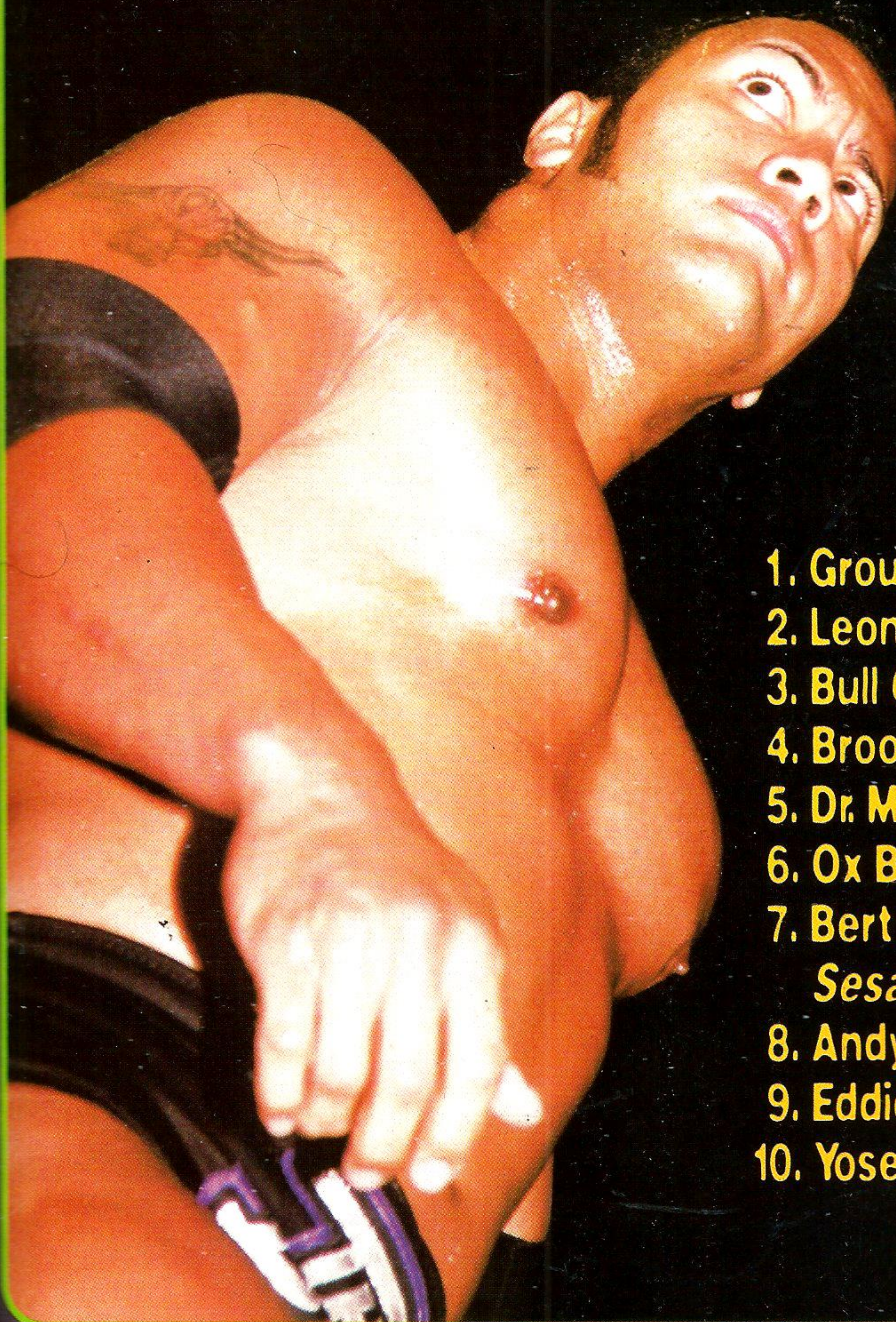
1. Rob Van Dam
2. Scott Steiner
3. The Rock
4. Kevin Nash
5. Vince McMahon
6. Chris Jericho
7. Justin Credible
8. Kurt Angle
9. Steve Corino
10. Buff Bagwell



Rob Van Dam

THE ROCK'S

10 FAVORITE EYEBROWS



1. Groucho Marx
2. Leonid Brezhnev
3. Bull Curry
4. Brooke Shields
5. Dr. McCoy
6. Ox Baker
7. Bert from
Sesame Street
8. Andy Rooney
9. Eddie Munster
10. Yosemite Sam



WRESTLING'S

10

BEST BODIES

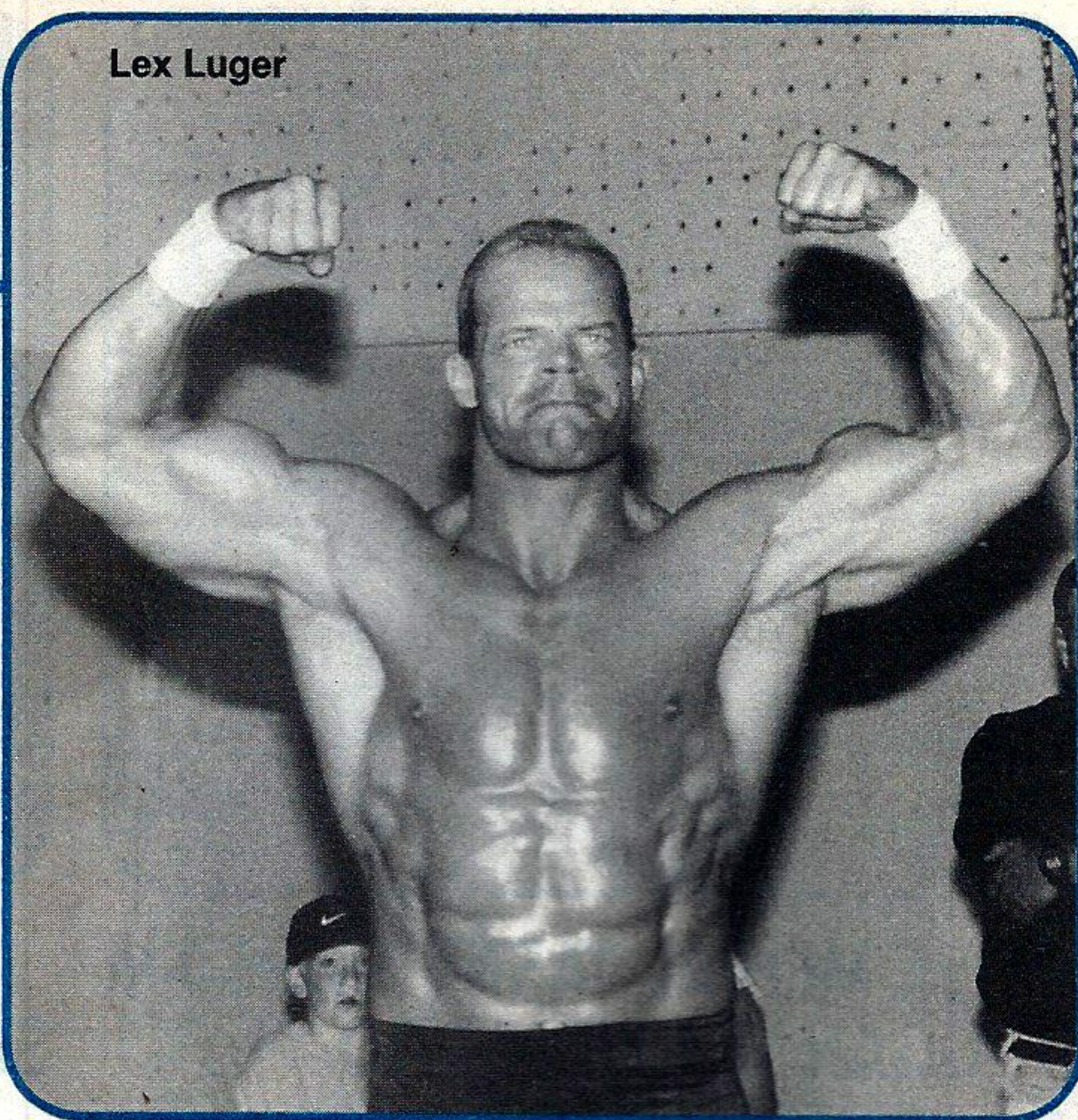
(FEMALE)

1. Kimberly Page
2. Torrie Wilson
3. Dawn Marie
4. Francine
5. Ivory
6. Chyna
7. The Kat
8. Elizabeth
9. Terri
10. Kristi Myst

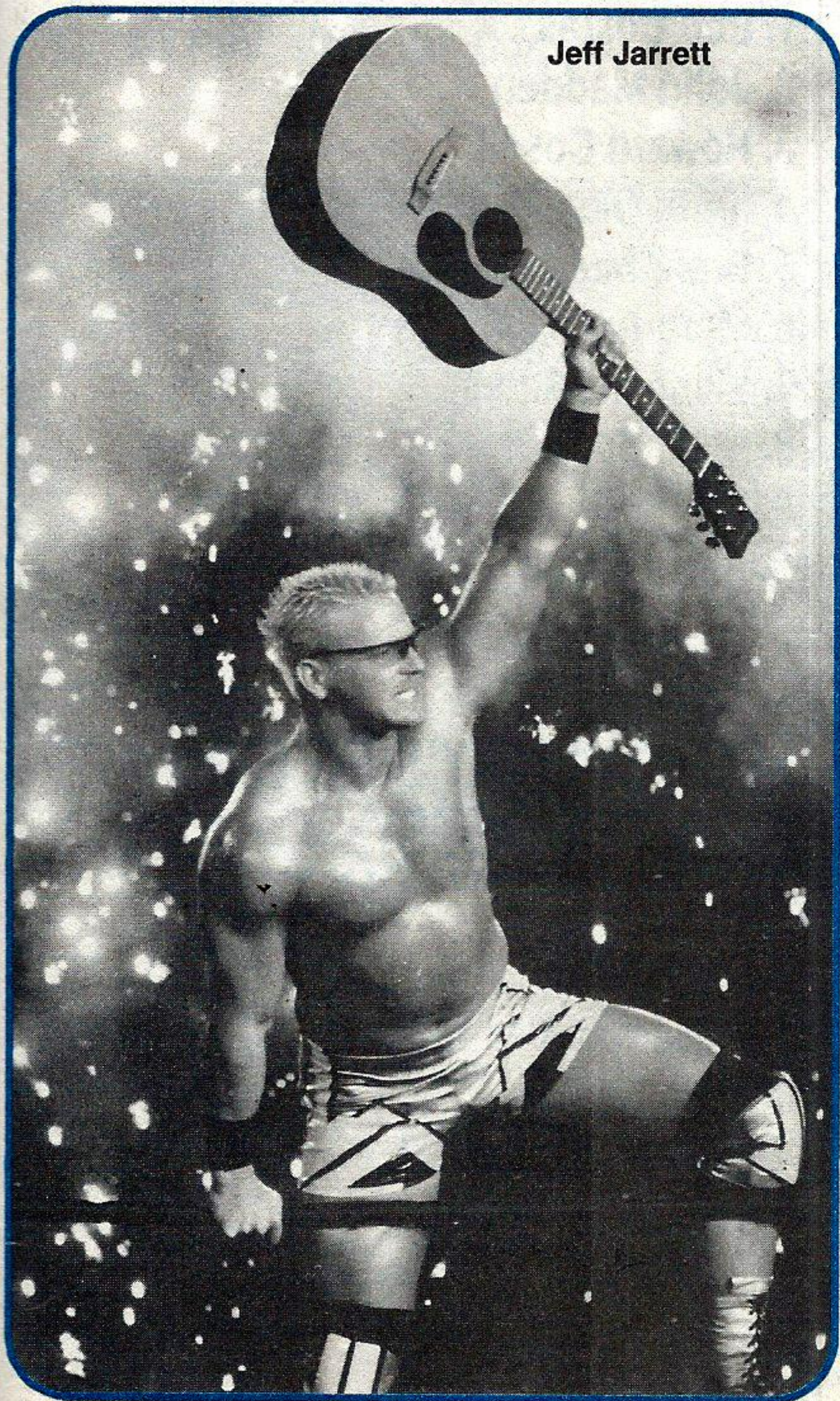
WRESTLING'S 10 BEST BODIES (MALE)

1. Lex Luger
2. Bill Goldberg
3. Buff Bagwell
4. Scott Steiner
5. Booker T
6. Sid Vicious
7. Perry Saturn
8. Evan Karagias
9. Mike Awesome
10. Cheetah Master

Lex Luger

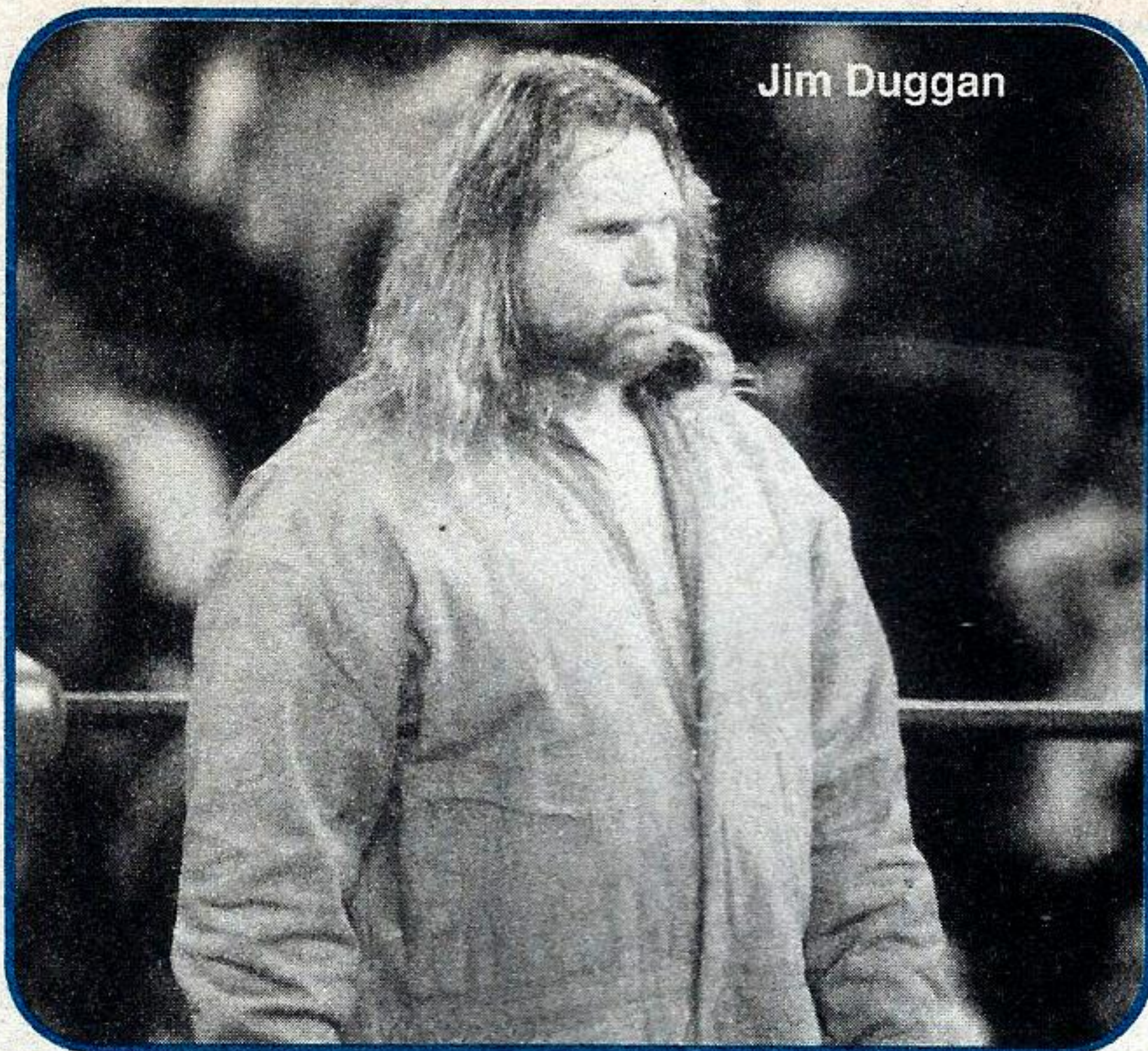


Jeff Jarrett



THE 10 PEOPLE WE WISH JEFF JARRETT WOULD HIT WITH A GUITAR

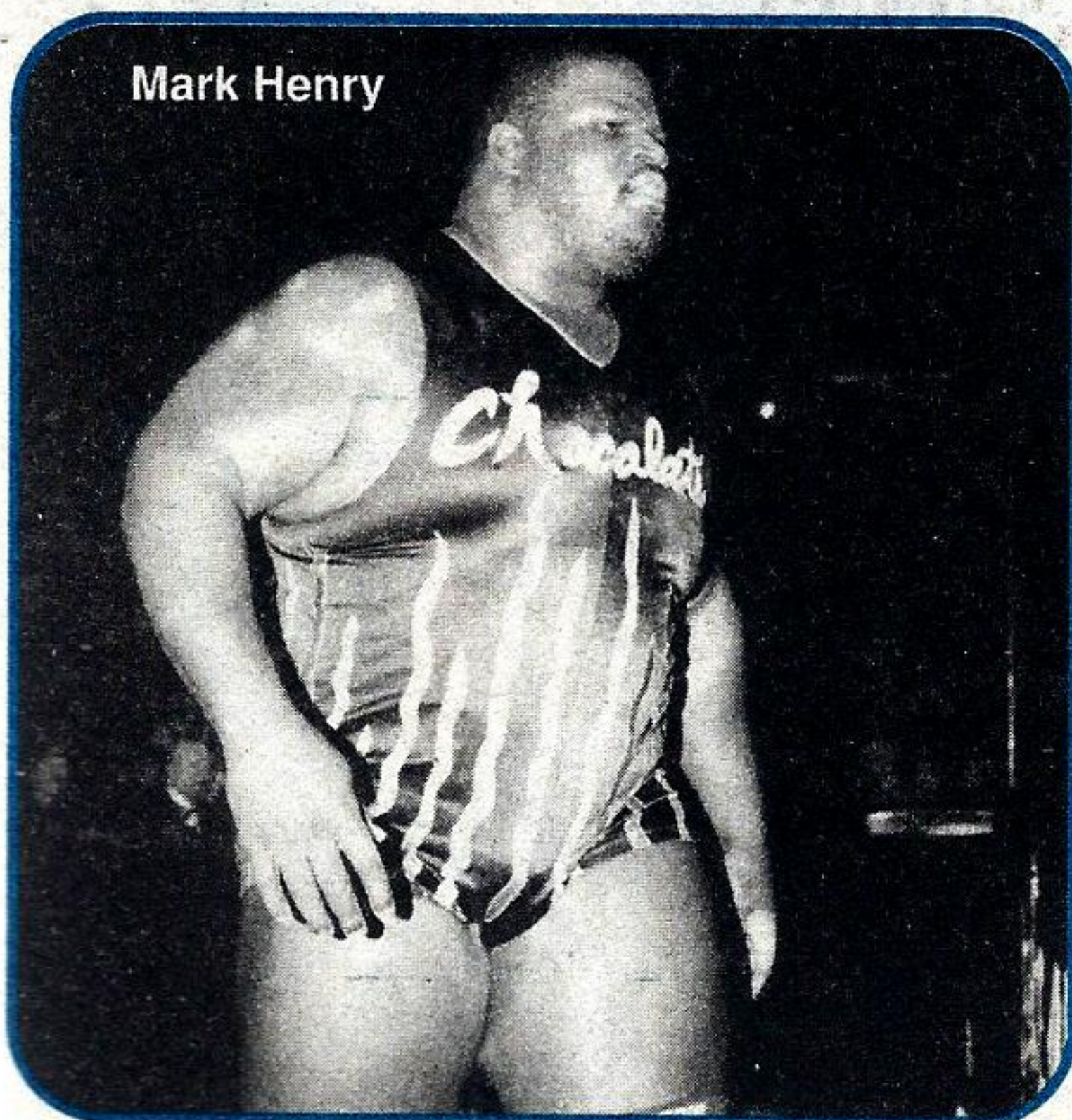
1. Jeff Jarrett
2. John Rocker
3. Oklahoma
4. Stephanie McMahon-Helmsley
5. Don King
6. Lou E. Dangerously
7. David Flair
8. Monica Lewinsky
9. Steve Corino
10. Matt Brock



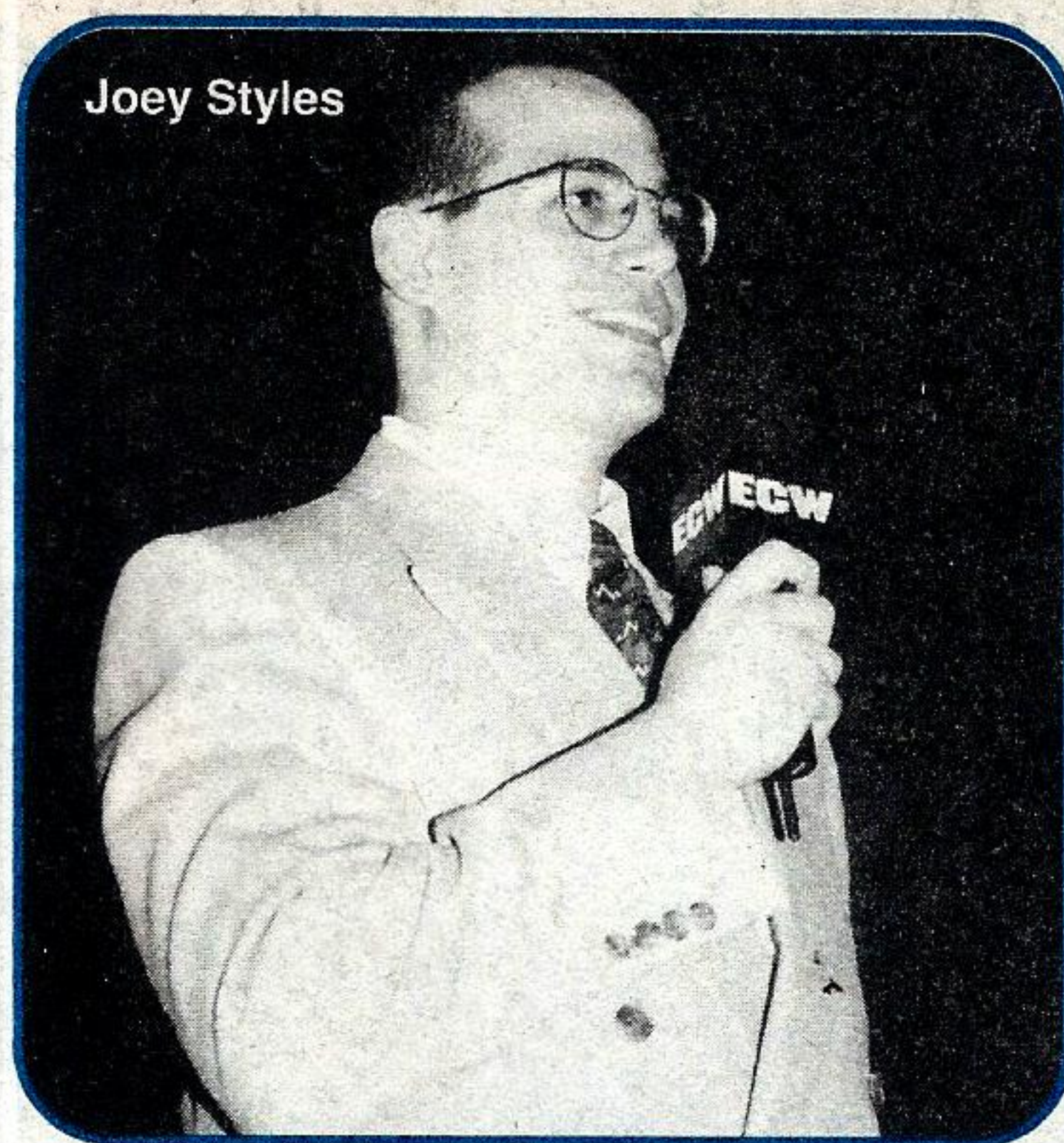
Jim Duggan

FIVE MENIAL TASKS EVEN JIM DUGGAN WOULDN'T DO

1. Clean up Scott Steiner's language
2. Figure out who's in charge of the WCW creative team this week
3. Shampoo Tank Abbott's beard
4. Explain to everyone how to figure out the difference between Ron and Don Harris
5. Come up with a new catch-phrase to replace "Hooooooo!"



Mark Henry



Joey Styles

JOEY STYLES' 10 FAVORITE SPORTS ANNOUNCERS

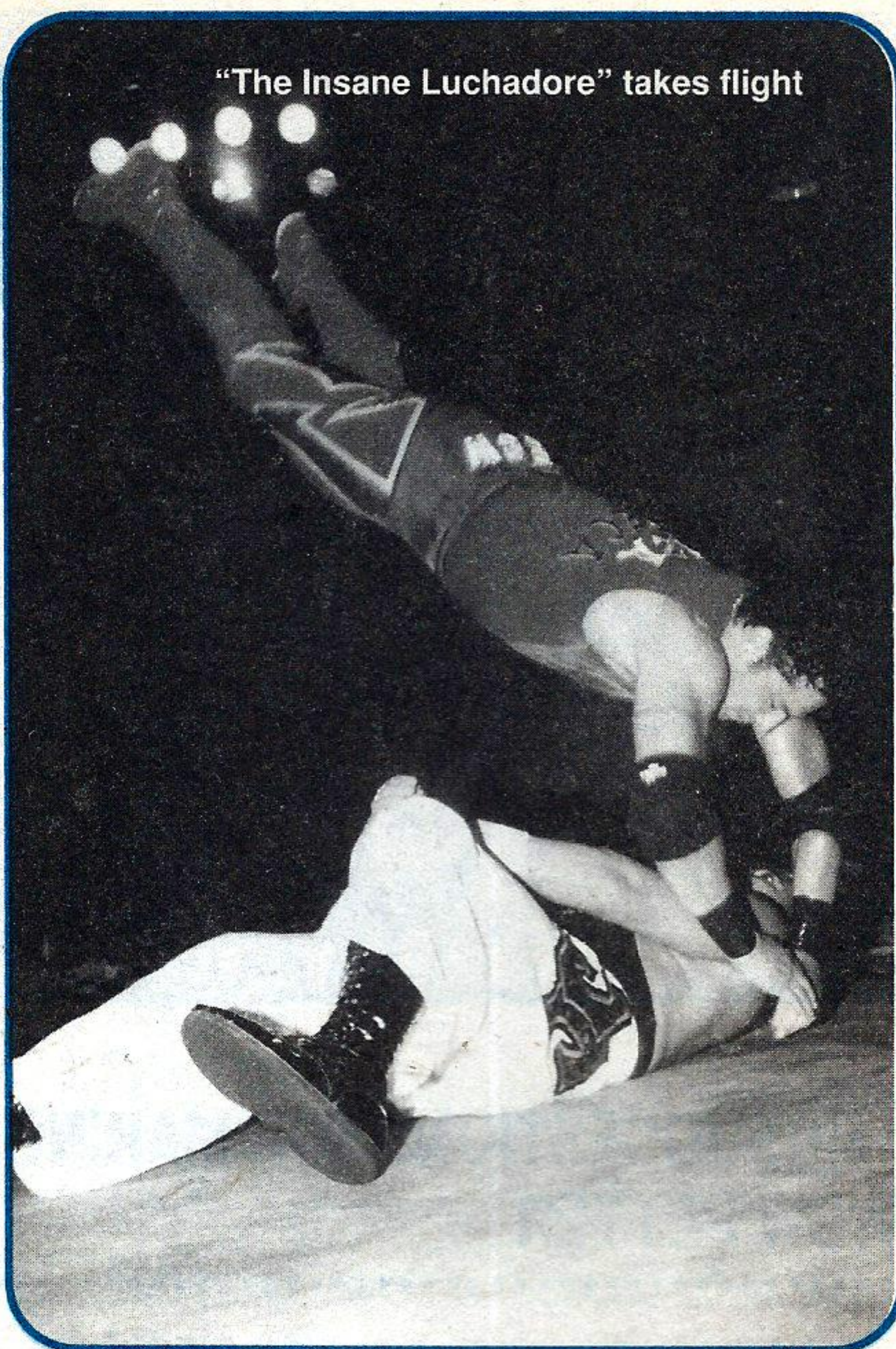
1. Bob Costas
2. John Madden
3. Howard Cosell
4. Keith Olbermann
5. Brent Musberger
6. Marv Albert
7. Vince McMahon
8. Keith Jackson
9. Jim Ross
10. Harry Caray

MARK HENRY'S FIVE FAVORITE POETS

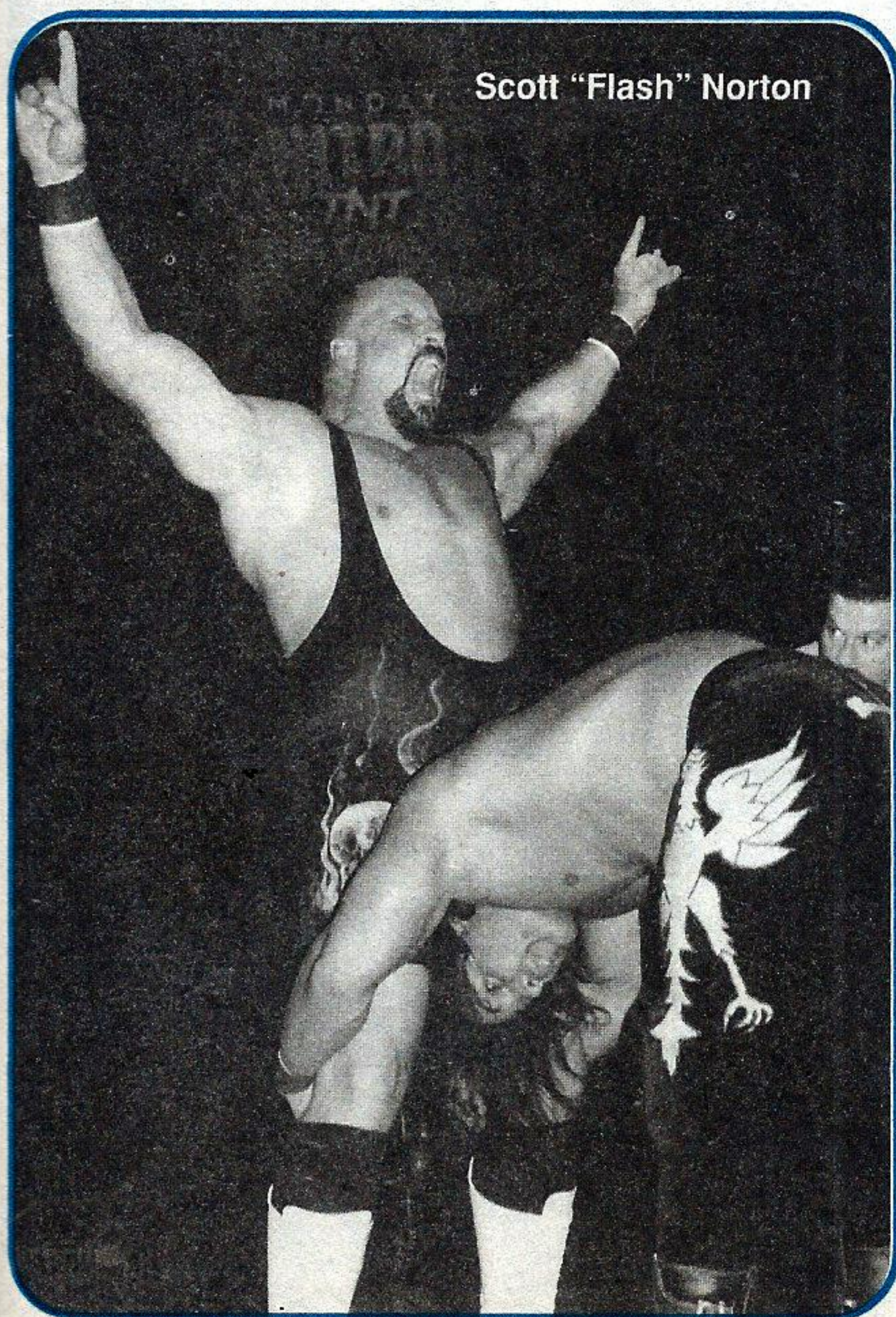
1. Lord Byron
2. William Butler Yeats
3. John Keats
4. William Shakespeare
5. Alexander Pope

TOP 10 BEST NICKNAMES (CURRENT)

1. "The Insane Luchadore" (Super Crazy)
2. "The Human Suplex Machine" (Tazz)
3. "The Japanese Buzzsaw" (Yoshihiro Tajiri)
4. "Stone-Cold" (Steve Austin)
5. "Dr. Death" (Steve Williams)
6. "Big Poppa Pump" (Scott Steiner)
7. "The Beast From The East" (Bam Bam Bigelow)
8. "The Big Red Machine" (Kane)
9. "The Canadian Crippler" (Chris Benoit)
10. "Mr. PPV" (Rob Van Dam)



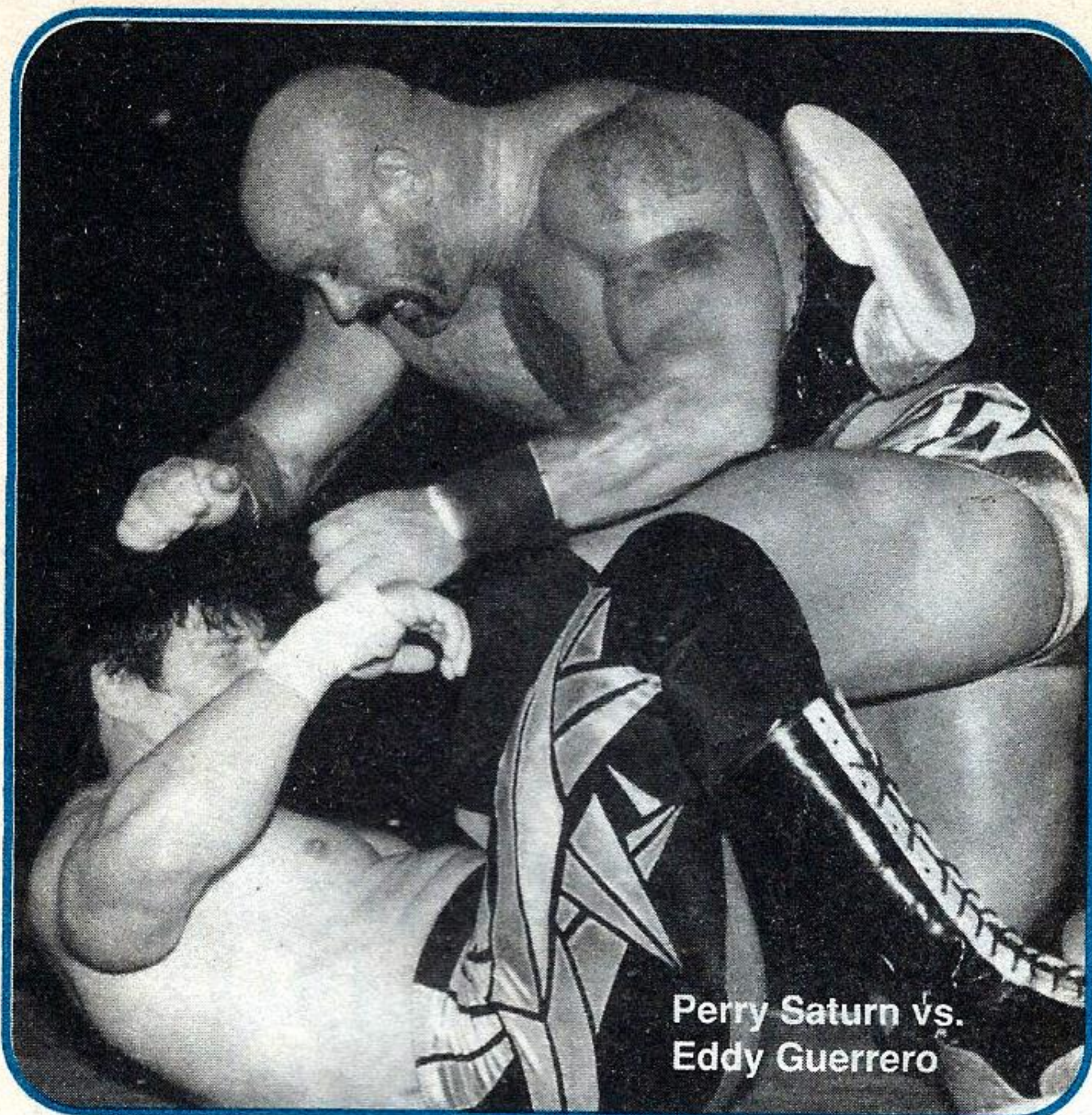
"The Insane Luchadore" takes flight



Scott "Flash" Norton

TOP 10 WORST NICKNAMES (CURRENT)

1. "Flash" (Scott Norton)
2. "The Game" (Triple-H)
3. "Sexual Chocolate" (Mark Henry)
4. "King Of Old School" (Steve Corino)
5. "The Big Shot" (Hardcore Holly)
6. "Big Sexy" (Kevin Nash)
7. "Dangerous Bull" (Don Basher)
8. "The Mastodon" (Vader)
9. "The Phenom" (The Undertaker)
10. "Mr. 387" (Shane Hooker)



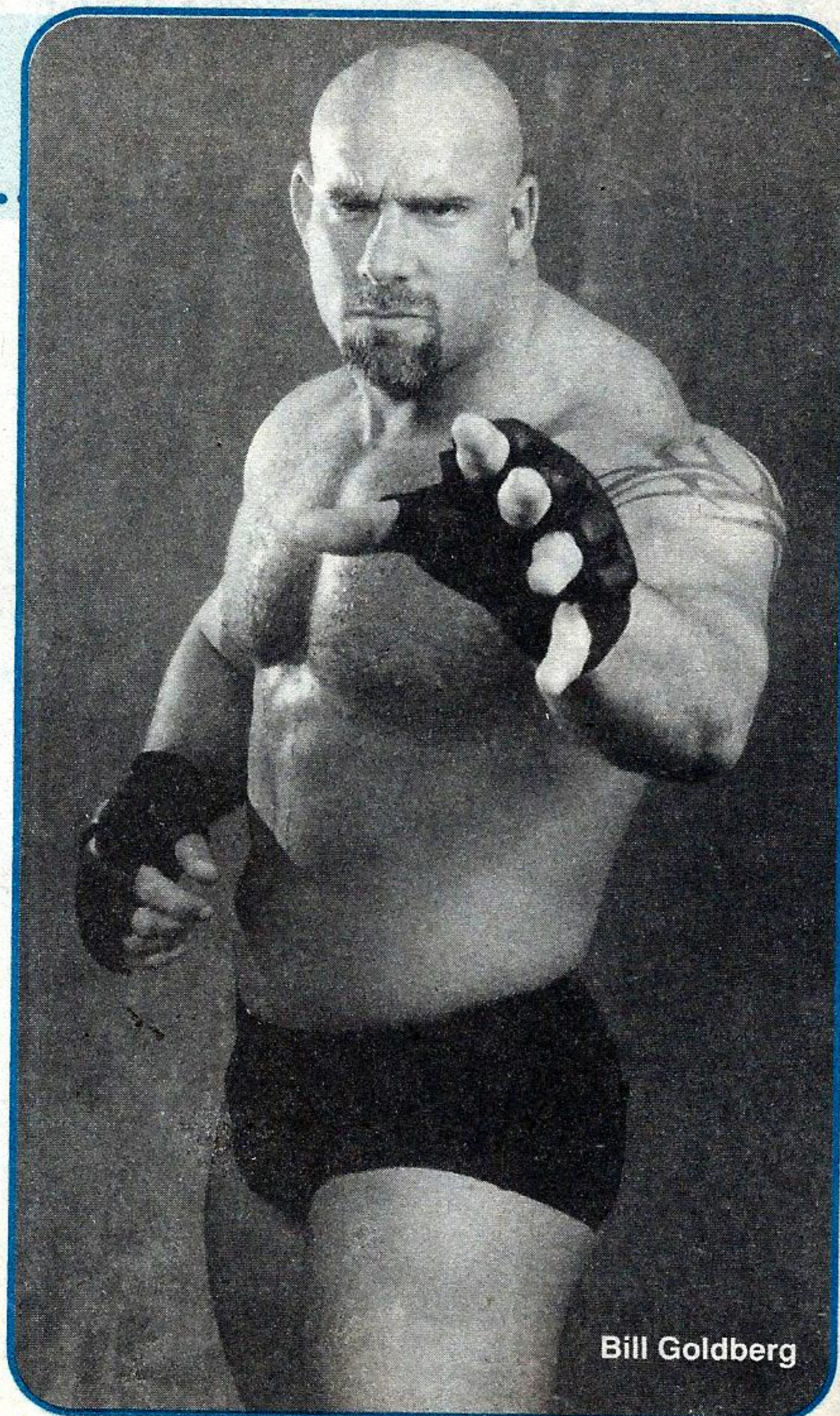
Perry Saturn vs.
Eddy Guerrero

PERRY SATURN'S **10** FAVORITE PLANETS

1. Mars
2. Saturn
3. Planet Hollywood
4. Uranus
5. Planet of the Apes
6. Jupiter
7. Earth
8. Tattoine
9. The Daily Planet
10. Neptune

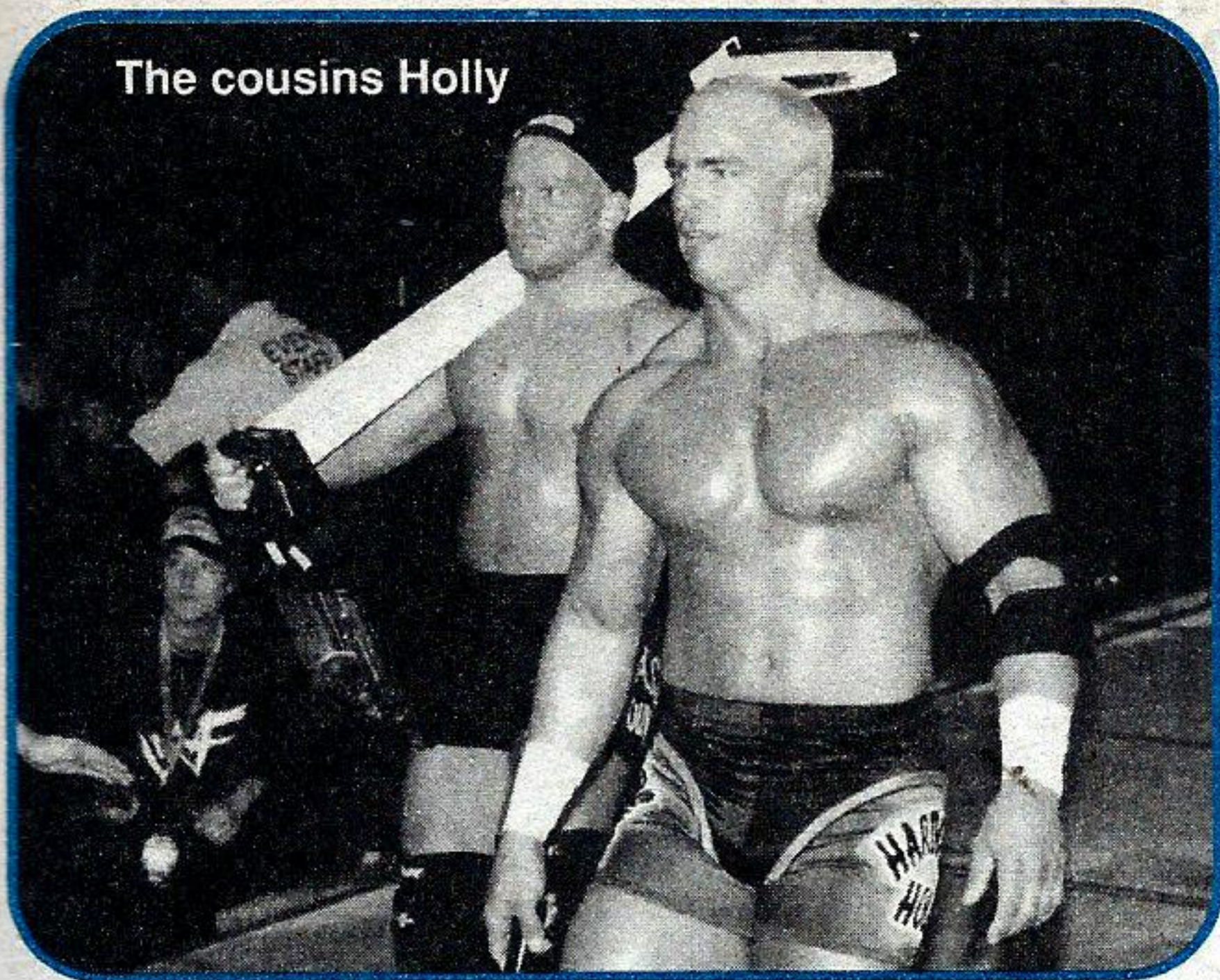
10 SUGGESTIONS FOR MAKING WCW BETTER

1. *Gold-berg! Gold-berg! Gold-berg!*
2. Stop trying to imitate the WWF
3. Find a way to make the titles more meaningful
4. No more wrestlers as commissioner or president
5. Less talking, more wrestling
6. Stick to one two-man broadcasting team for each show
7. Scout the independents, sign the best young stars available, and give them time to develop into superstars
8. Get rid of the NWO once and for all
9. Scrap the hardcore division
10. Do everything possible to keep the big stars happy



Bill Goldberg

The cousins Holly



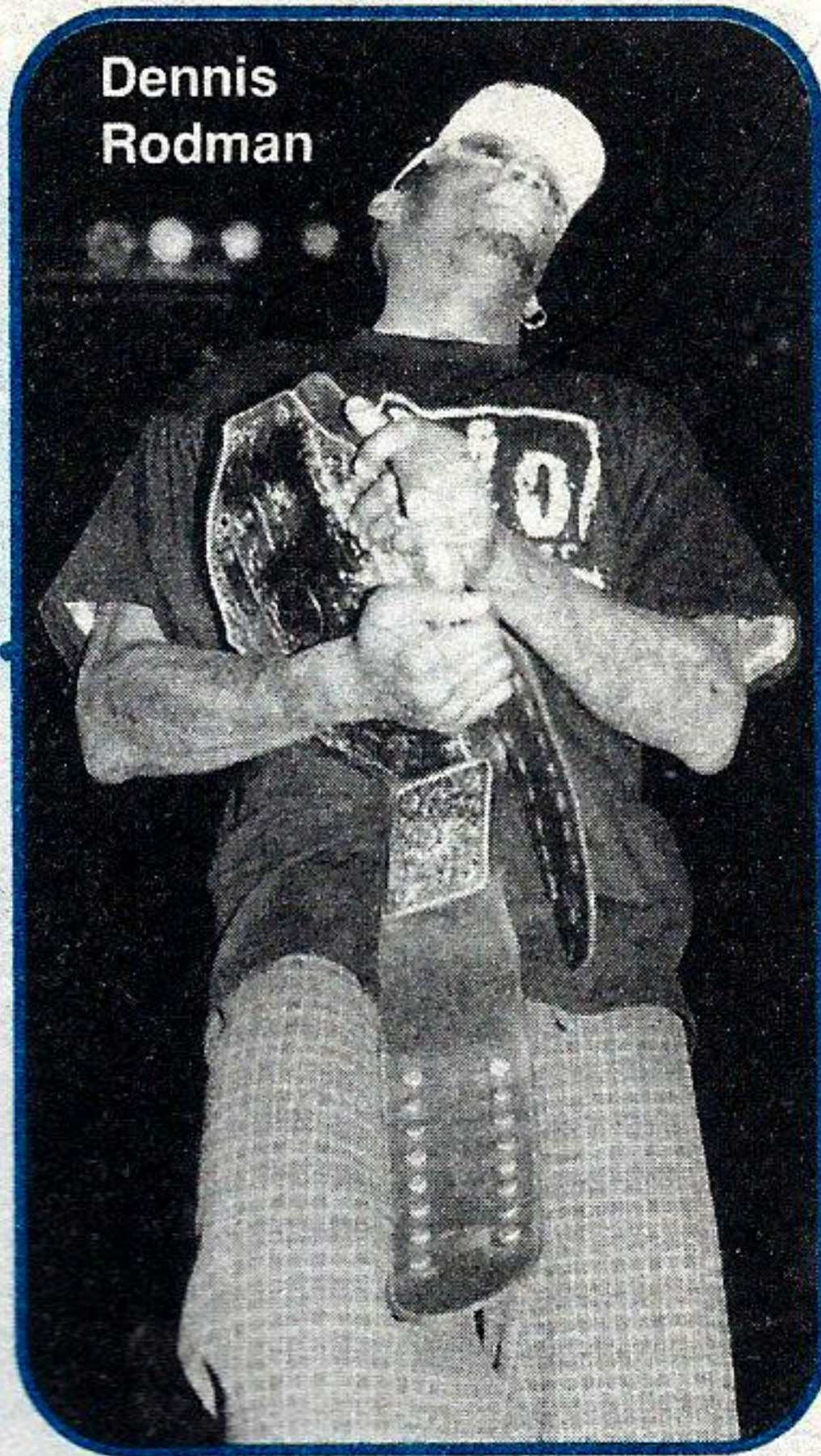
THE HOLLY COUSINS' 10 FAVORITE SUPER HEAVYWEIGHTS OF ALL-TIME

1. Butterbean
2. Marlon Brando
3. The McGuire Twins
4. Rusty Wallace
5. Napoleon
6. Rerun from *What's Happening*
7. Donald Trump
8. Bear Bryant
9. Andre the Giant
10. Vince McMahon

10 THINGS WRESTLING COULD DO WITHOUT

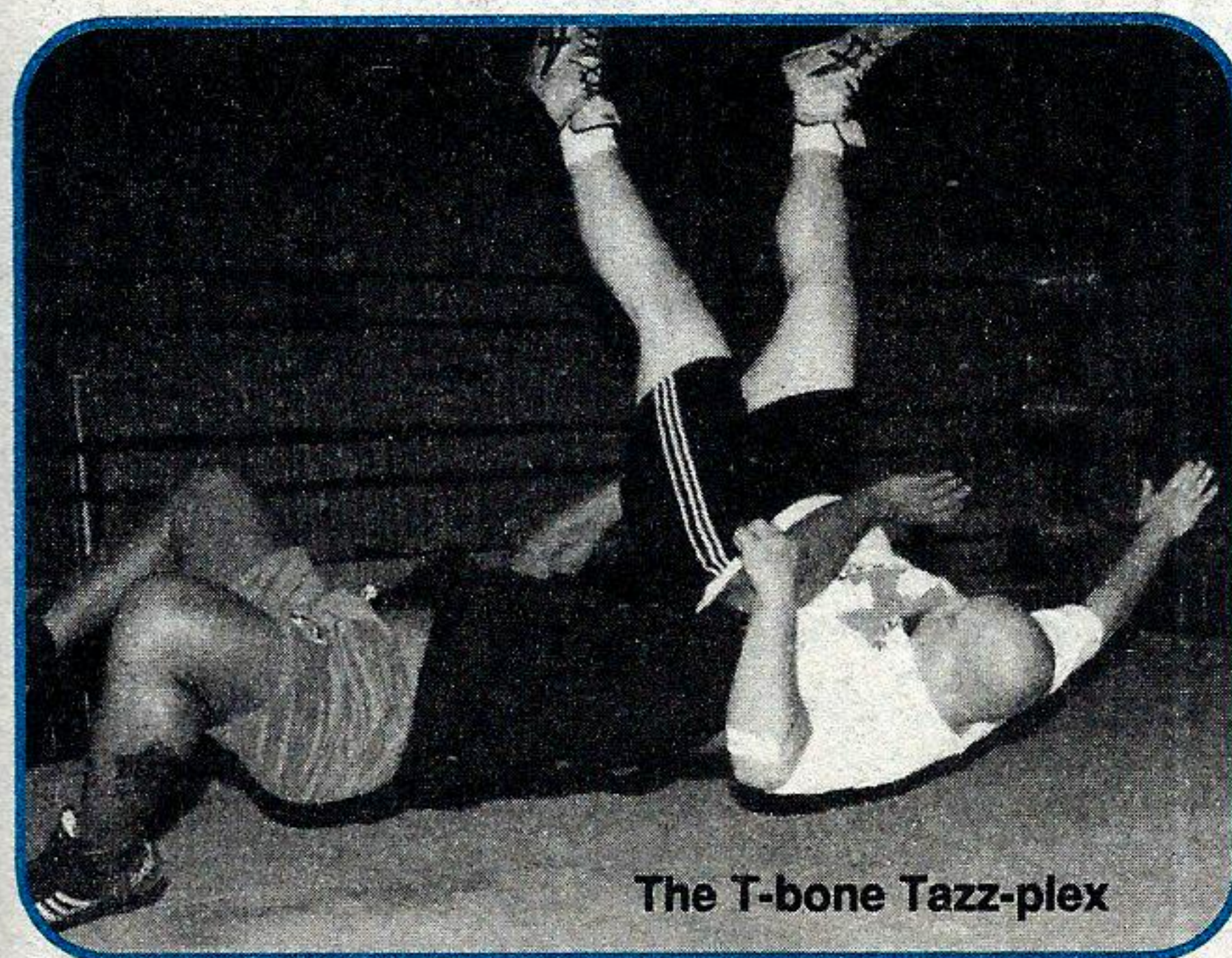
1. Dennis Rodman
2. The Internet influence
3. Phony retirements
4. Three-way title matches
5. Fake Stings
6. Mae Young's striptease
7. Any and all references to Survivor Series '97
8. Staple guns
9. *Thirty* pay-per-views per year
10. Booking committees

Dennis Rodman



TAZZ' BEST EIGHT SUPLEX VARIATIONS

1. T-bone Tazz-plex
2. Tabletop Tazz-plex
3. Tiger Tazz-plex
4. Cradle Tazz-plex
5. Gut-wrench Tazz-plex
6. Saito Tazz-plex
7. Front head and arm Tazz-plex
8. Tight waist Tazz-plex

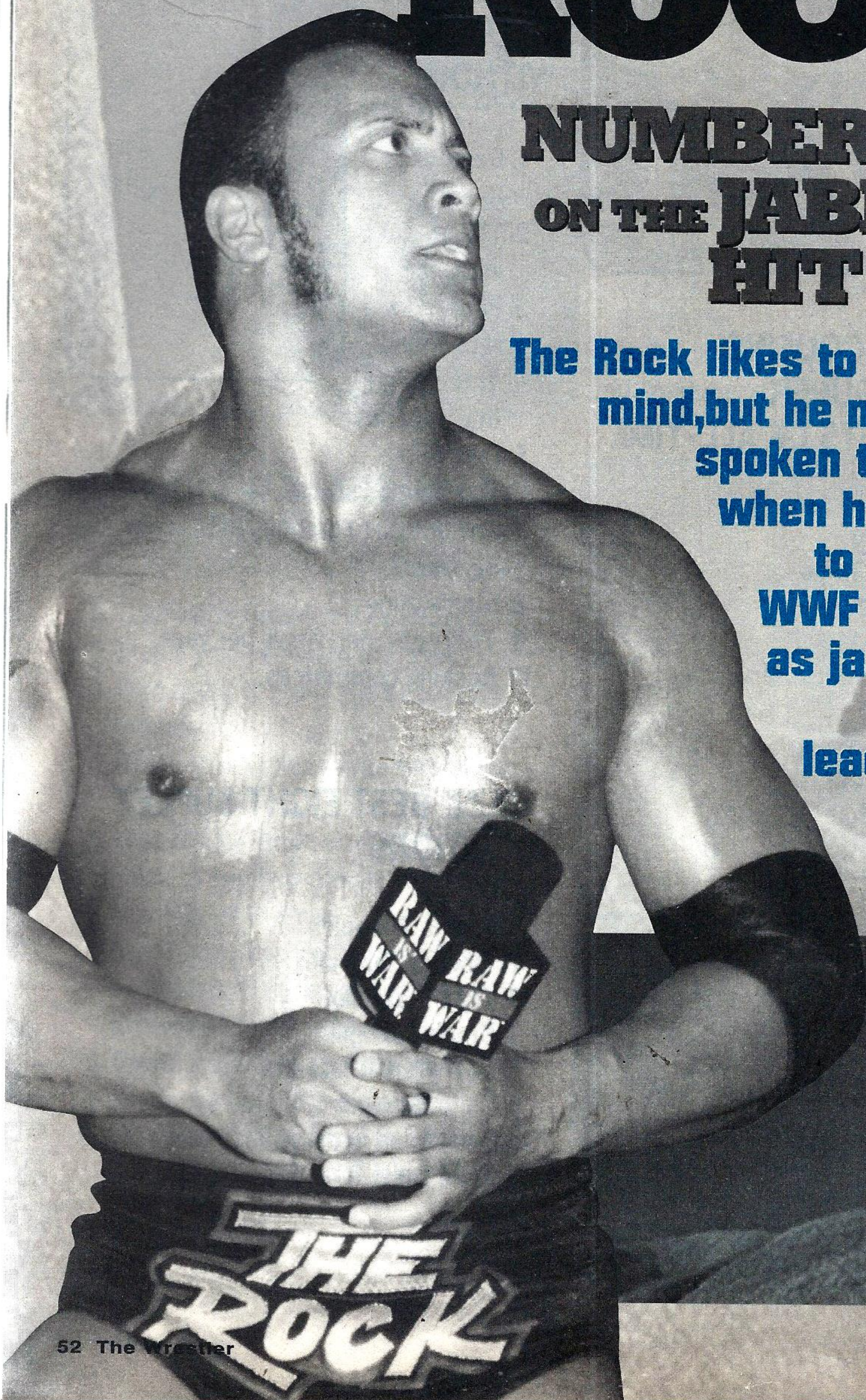


The T-bone Tazz-plex

the **ROCK**

NUMBER ONE ON THE JABRONI HIT LIST

The Rock likes to speak his mind, but he might have spoken too openly when he referred to his fellow WWF wrestlers as jabronies in the days leading up to the Royal Rumble





Fans go crazy over The Rock's skills on the microphone (opposite page), but many of his fellow wrestlers, including those in DeGeneration X (above), have taken offense to The Rock's comments.

By Dave Rosenbaum

IT WAS WITH complete confidence that Triple-H allowed The Rock to choose any partner he wished for a match against him and The Big Show at *Raw Is War* on January 24. Triple-H had absolutely no doubt in his hard-working mind that The Rock wouldn't be able to come up with a partner, and that he and Big Show would batter The Rock senseless in front of the big crowd in Philadelphia.

There were several reasons for Triple-H's confidence, and all of them were very good:

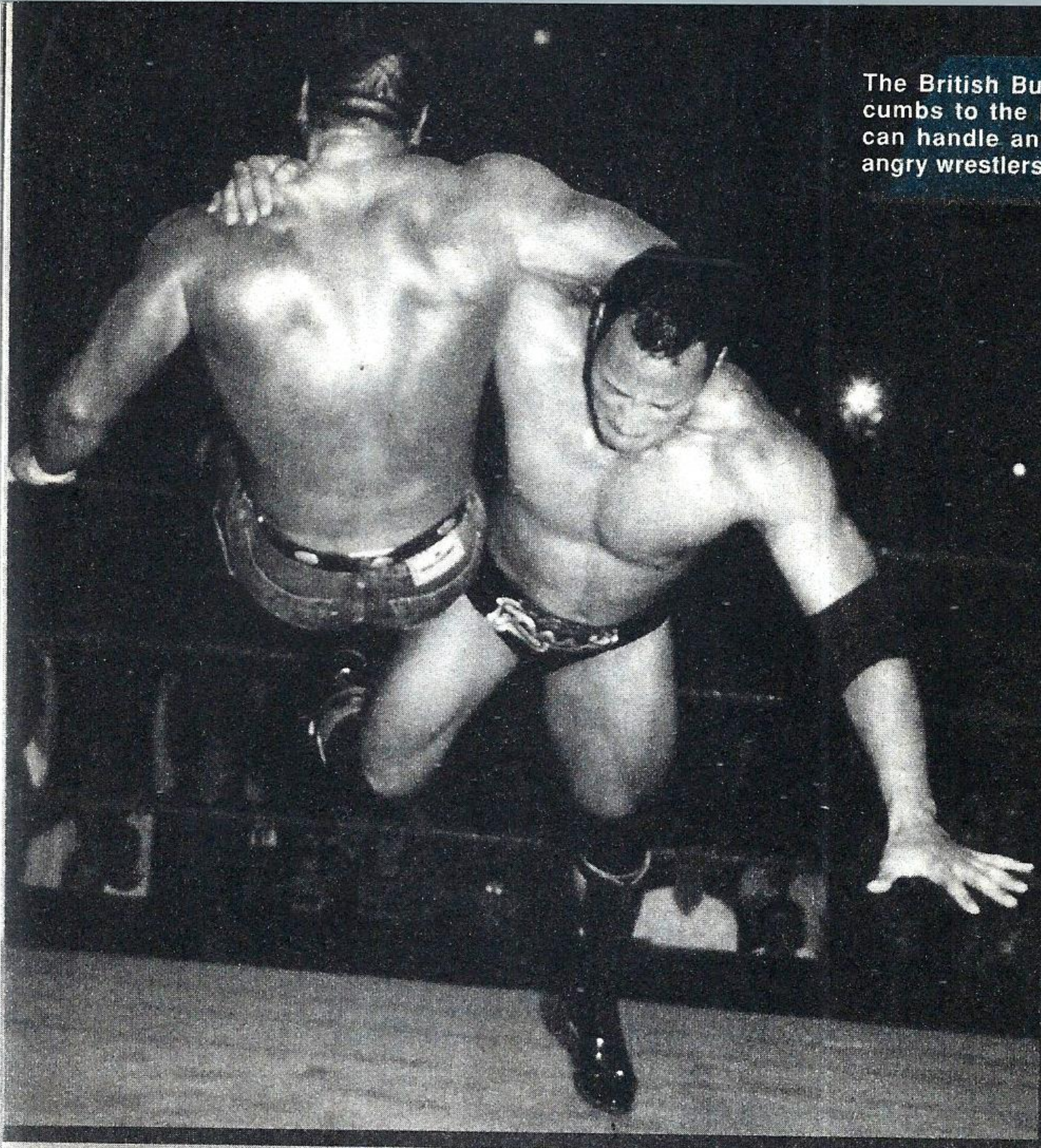
1. As the self-appointed spokesman for that portion of the WWF's talent roster that he

felt had been ignored and abused by the McMahon-Helmsley era, The Rock several times referred to all the other wrestlers as "jabronies."

2. After winning the Royal Rumble, The Rock exclaimed that he had just eliminated "29 other jabronies."

3. Just about any wrestler that The Rock might have asked to team with him was one of those "jabronies."

4. It was well-known throughout the WWF that the so-called jabronies resented the way The Rock looked down his nose at them. Although many of them resented Triple-H and wanted to see him put in his place, they har-



The British Bulldog, like so many before him, succumbs to the Rock bottom. Individually, The Rock can handle any man in the WWF, but a mob of 29 angry wrestlers will be hard for him to fight off.

The Rock and making it a three-against-one handicap match, because that's what a lot of us would have done. I think that's what most of us would have done."

Rikishi, however, might have suspected that Triple-H and Stephanie McMahon-Helmsley would be enraged by his decision to team with The Rock, and that their anger would further advance his career. He was right. At *Smackdown* two nights later, Triple-H and Stephanie forced Rikishi to wrestle The Rock. They wrestled that night, and Rikishi wrestled an outstanding match before Big Show and Triple-H interfered.

"Rikishi got what he wanted," Brown pointed out. "He was smart. He manipulated The Rock, Triple-H, and Stephanie. But believe me, there's no love lost between Rikishi and The Rock. Just ask him."

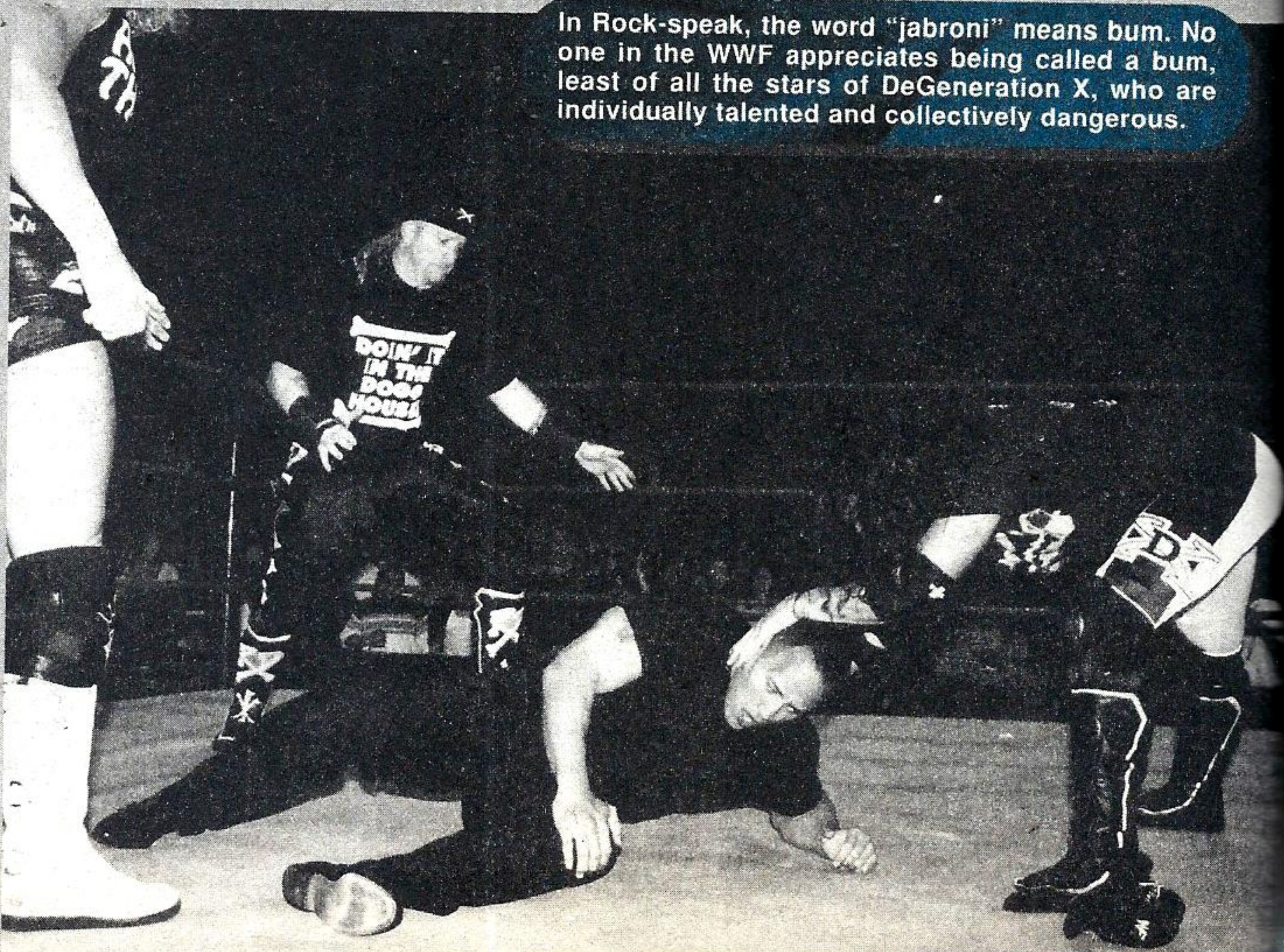
We did, and Rikishi walked away without answering our

bored more anger toward The Rock because they felt he had "deserted them," in the words of D-Lo Brown, who participated in the Rumble and lost.

That's why WWF viewers—and especially Triple-H—were shocked when Rikishi Phatu made his way to the ring and joined The Rock for the tag team match, which The Rock and his partner won by disqualification. But, according to WWF insiders, Phatu wasn't acting out of love for The Rock.

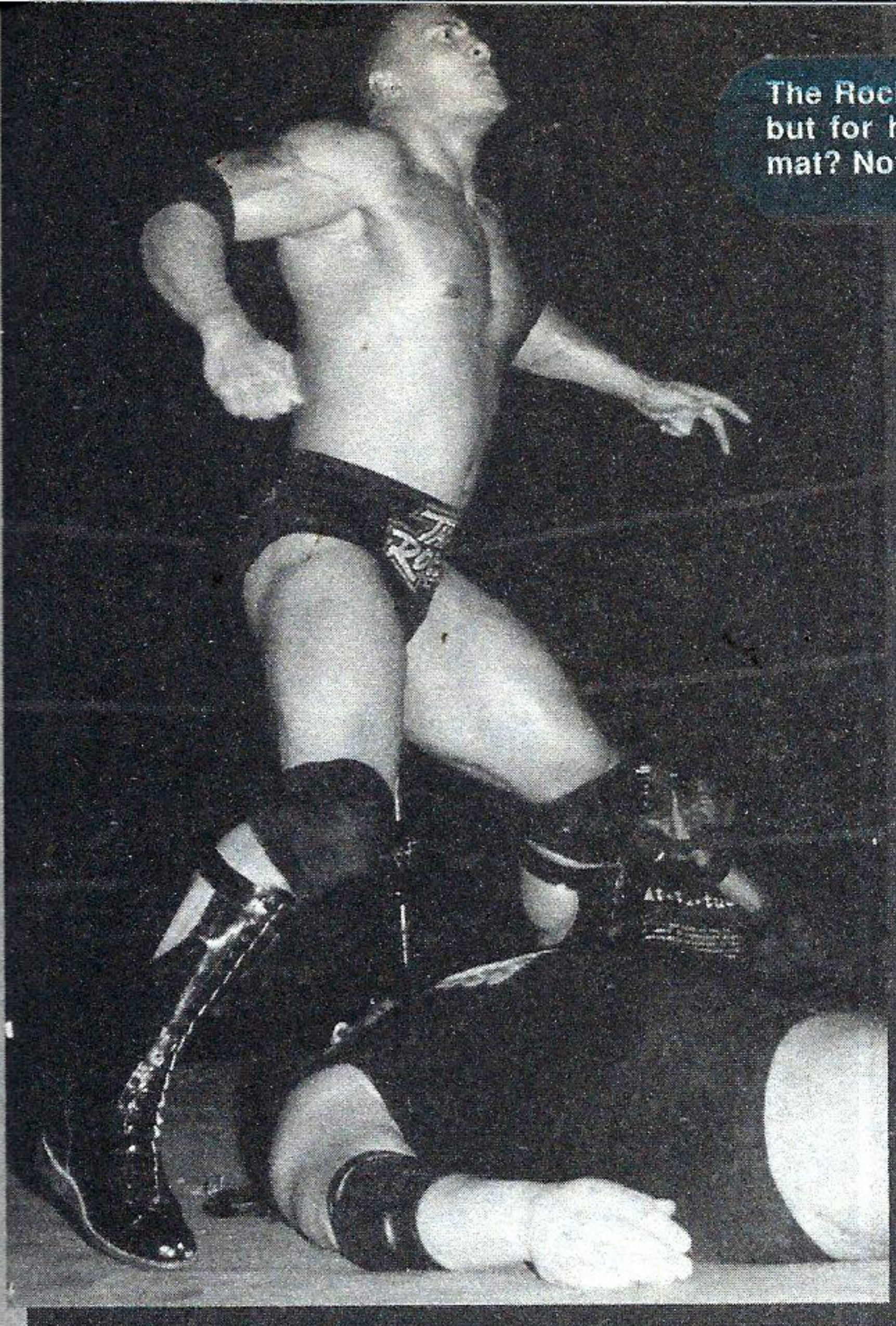
"He was just seizing an opportunity," said one mid-card wrestler. "He saw an opportunity to wrestle

in the main event at *Raw* and took it. I'm sure that at some point, Rikishi might have thought about turning against



In Rock-speak, the word "jabroni" means bum. No one in the WWF appreciates being called a bum, least of all the stars of DeGeneration X, who are individually talented and collectively dangerous.

The Rock prepares to deliver the people's elbow on The Big Show, but for how long can he keep a seething 500-pound giant on the mat? Not for long if Show and Triple-H have anything to do with it.



lowing night—Big Show.

"I'm not surprised that a lot of people are angry with The Rock," The Rock said. "The Rock speaks his mind and takes no prisoners."

How do you think they feel about you, we asked The Rock ... and got a predictable answer:

"It doesn't matter how they feel about The Rock!" The Rock said.

Yet it never hurts to have

Rock's already said a few words too many. I'm not saying what's going to happen, but there are a heckuva lot of people around here who want to shut his mouth for good. A lot of people are tired of his talk and tired of him hogging all the attention. To a lot of wrestlers, The Rock is nothing but talk, and his talk is wearing thin."

Individually, there might not be a single jabroni capable of beating The Rock in a fair one-on-one match. But these jabronies aren't planning on attacking The Rock one-on-one. They plan on ganging up and attacking him en masse. The Rock says he isn't worried.

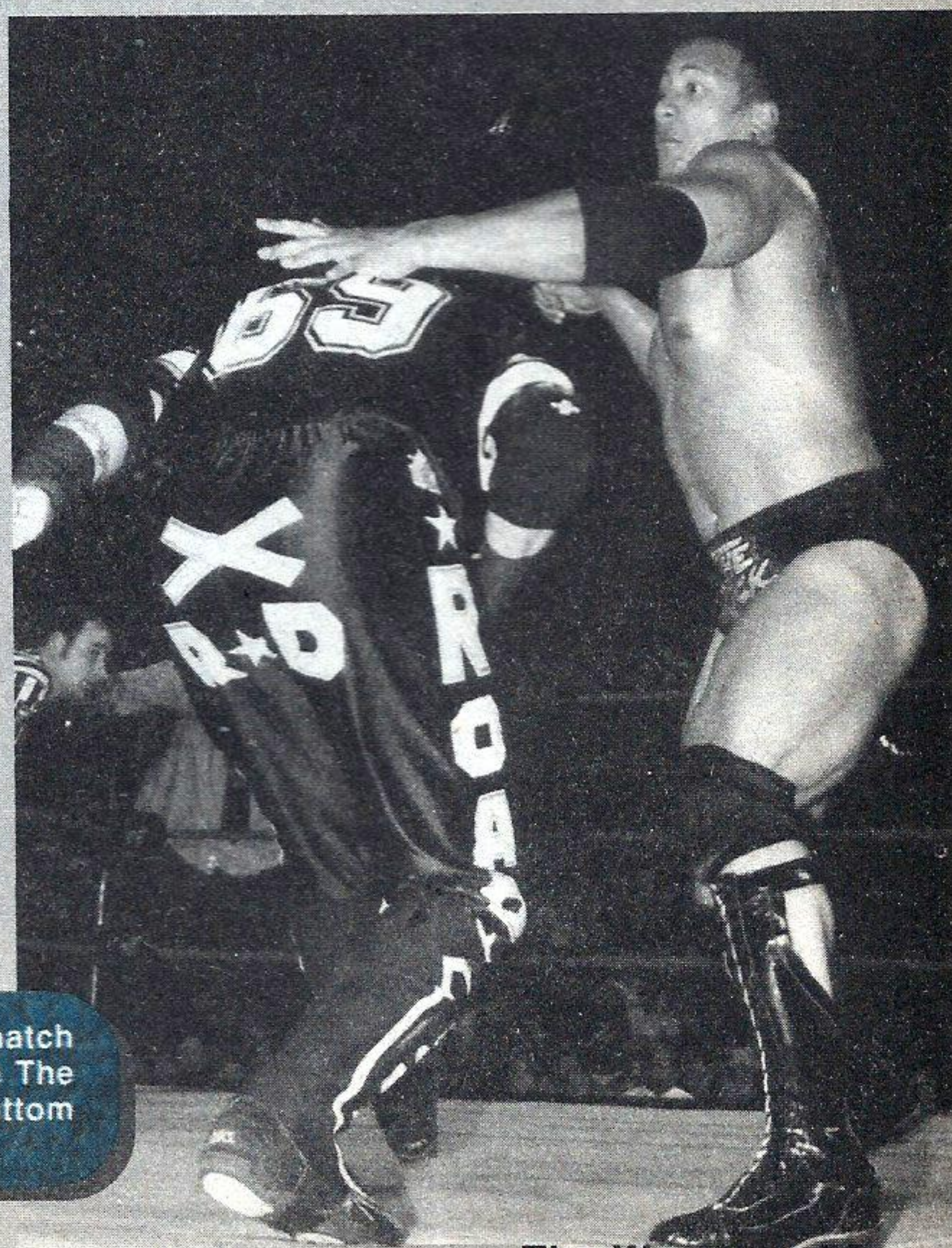
"Those jabronies couldn't beat The Rock at the Rumble, so why do they think they can beat The Rock now?" he asked.

Because they're angry. And there can't be anything more dangerous than 29 angry jabronies. □

question. Perhaps his silence said everything. Perhaps, too, the reluctance of the 27 other wrestlers who participated in the Rumble to team with The Rock at *Raw* speaks even louder than Rikishi's so-called career decision. Those 27 include just about every name worth talking about in the WWF: Brown, Grand Master Sexy, Headbanger Mosh, Christian, Scottie Too Hottie, Steve Blackman, Viscera, Big Bossman, Test, British Bulldog, Gangrel, Edge, Bob Backlund, Chris Jericho, Crash Holly, Chyna, Faarooq, Road Dogg, Al Snow, Val Venis, Prince Albert, Bob Holly, Billy Gunn, Bradshaw, Kane, The Godfather, and X-Pac. The only big name missing from this list belong to the wrestler who teamed with Triple-H the fol-

friends in wrestling, and right now The Rock doesn't have a lot of friends. Big Show hates him. Triple-H is out to destroy him. Cactus Jack barely tolerates him. The only thing that binds The Rock and Cactus Jack is the desire to destroy Triple-H. But if The Rock won the WWF World heavyweight title, you can bet that Cactus Jack would be the first man in line for a title shot.

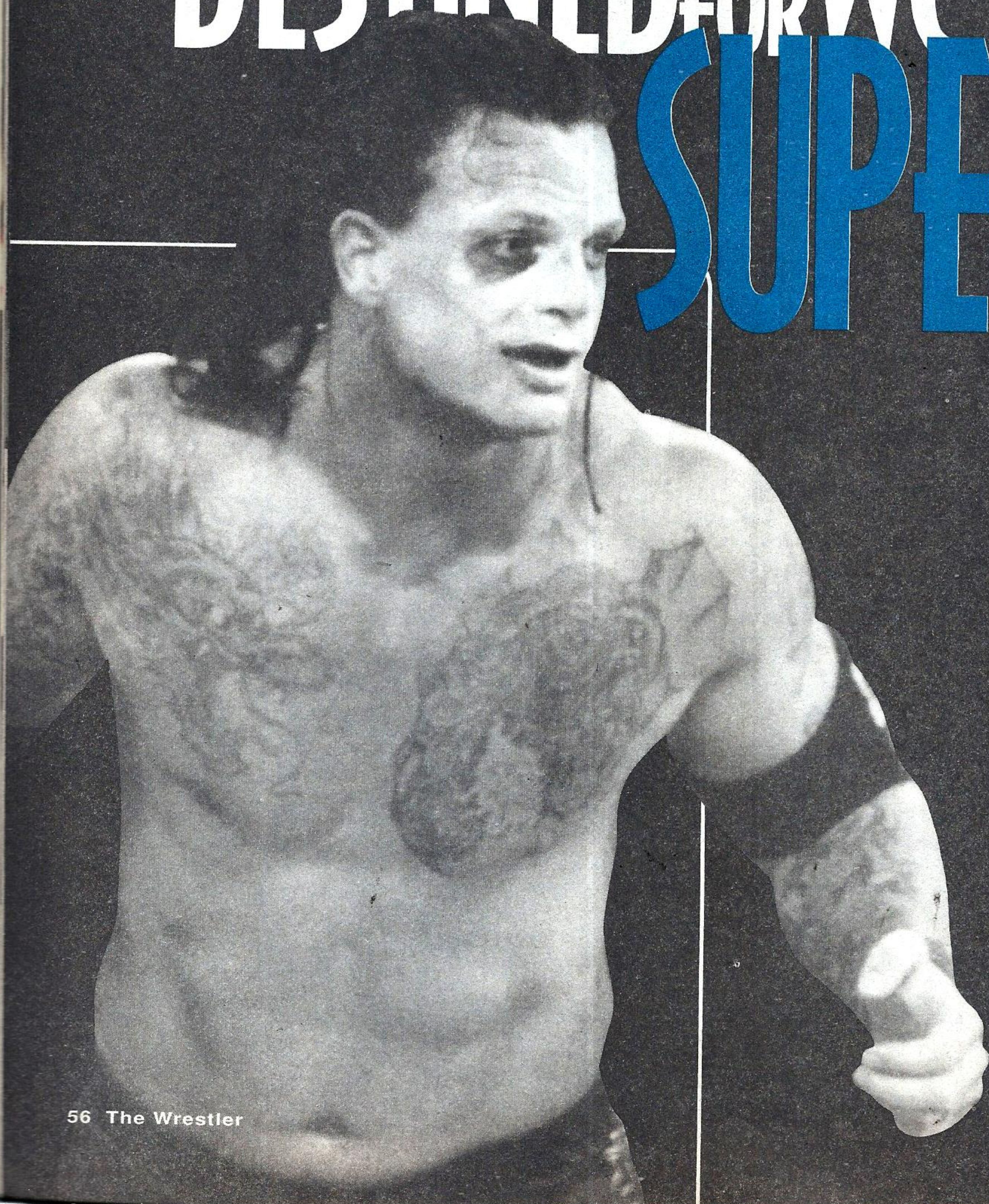
"And there'd be another 29 people behind him," Chyna said. "In this business, your mouth can get you into a lot of trouble, and The



Road Dogg is one of the few wrestlers in the WWF who can match The Rock's gift of gab, but he rarely insults his opponents like The Rock does. Is the Rock's mouth writing a check The Rock's bottom can't cash?

Now that the bloodsuckers are gone...

VAMPIRO IS DESTINED FOR WCW SUPER



By Dan Murphy

ALL IT TAKING the Glenn Danzig route to success. In the mid-1980s, Danzig split from The Misfits and found his greatest fame as a solo artist. Now Vampiro is doing the same.

Since his first appearance in WCW, Vampiro has been an enigma. In the beginning, he competed on his own, losing a few televised contests against long-time Lucha Libre nemesis Konnan. Then Vampiro vanished—only to resurface a short time later as part of The Dead Pool with Raven and The Insane Clown Posse. Soon, though, Raven flew back to ECW, and

Vampiro was stuck teaming with two part-time wrestlers with precious little experience in the ring. After ICP cost The Dead Pool a number of high-profile six-man tag contests, the Posse went back to singing and wrestling in their own promotion.

Vampiro, meanwhile, vanished again.

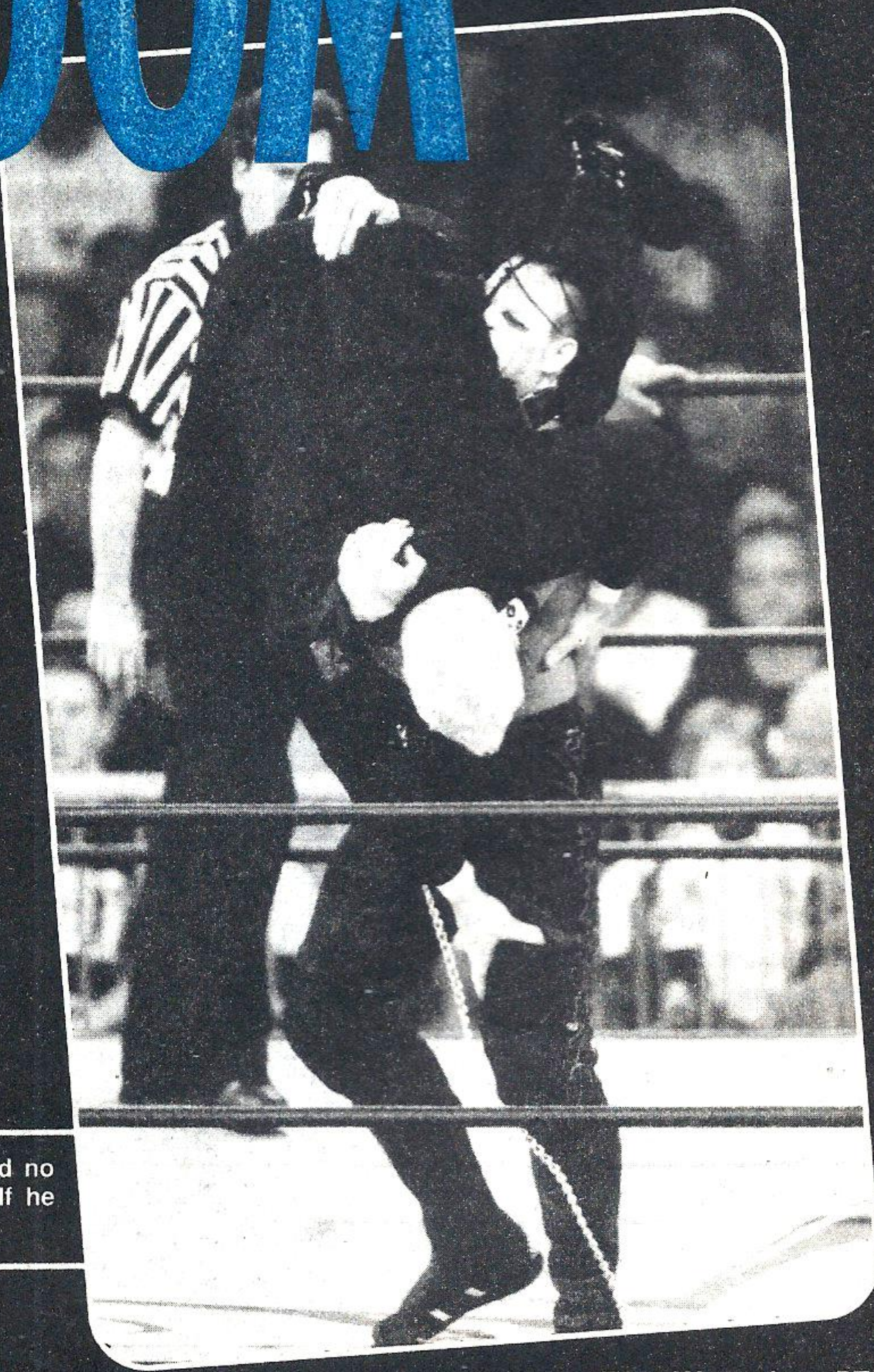
The next time he returned, a new hardcore band was at his side—the venerable punk/metal legends The Misfits. Like ICP, The Misfits were determined to try their hands in the ring. Like ICP, they were thoroughly overmatched (both The Wall and “Dr. Death” Steve Williams can take a lot of credit for sending The Misfits back to their groupies and club dates).

STARDOM

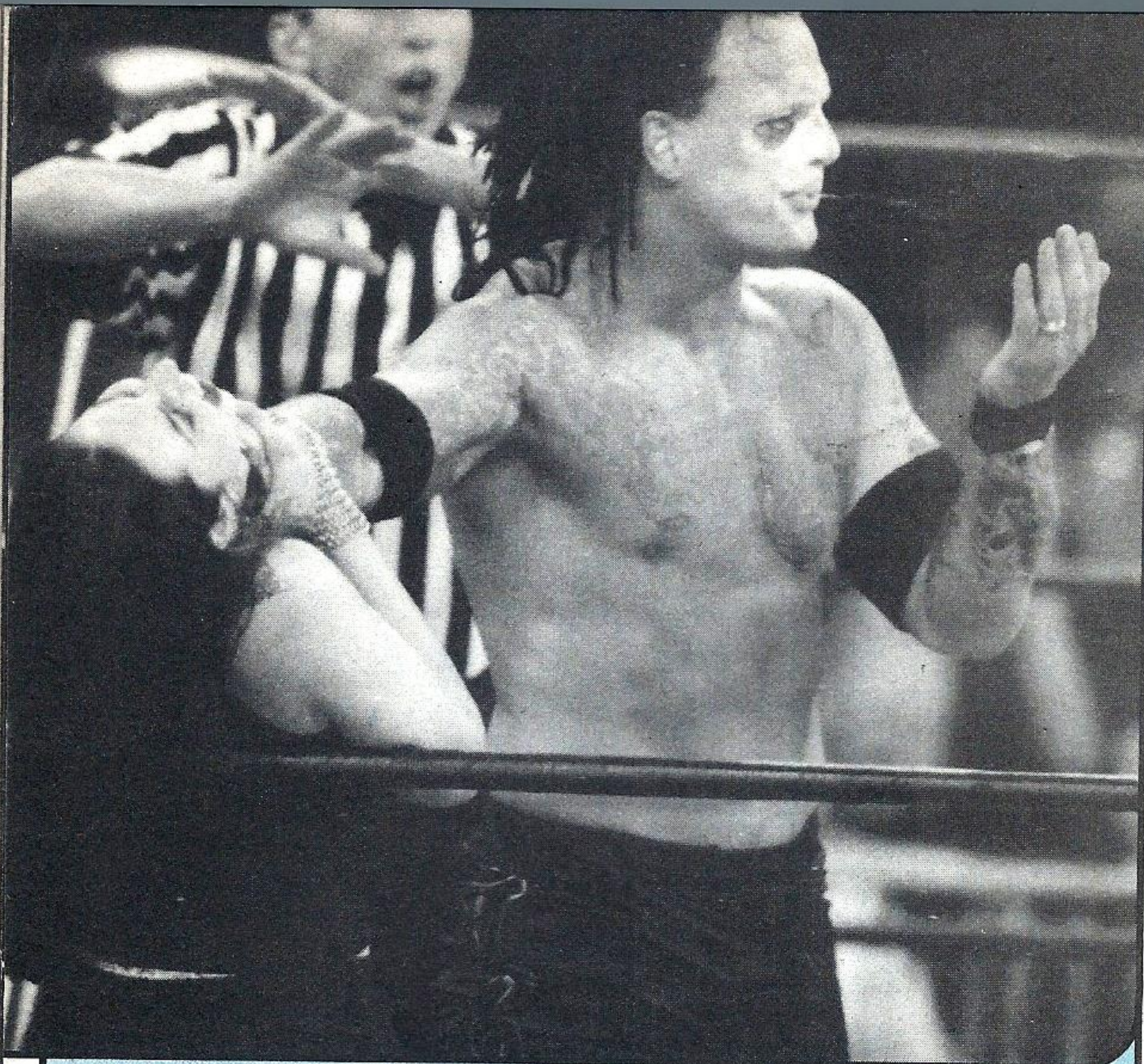
Photos by Claus Andersen & Vern Verna

The Insane Clown Posse was, well, a bunch of clowns. The Misfits were a bad fit. But now that Vampiro is on his own, the wins are piling up—and we don't expect that to stop

Though Vampiro isn't known for his power, he had no trouble lifting and bodyslamming The Wall here. If he proves he can beat the big men in WCW, look out!



The Wrestler 57



David Flair's girlfriend, Daphne, doesn't shy away from getting physically involved in matches—and Vampiro won't hesitate to teach her a lesson or two. Still, he'd rather be battling the men who hold the titles in WCW.

Finally, Vampiro decided that going solo was his only viable option. Frankly, after watching his stunning matches with Kidman, we're left wondering why he didn't ditch the bloodsuckers sooner!

At the January 24 *Nitro*, for instance, Vampiro waged a back-and-forth battle with Kidman. On that night, the high-flying cruiserweight reversed what appeared to be a variation of a superplex into a huracanrana off the top rope to score the three-count against Vamp.

Strangely enough, Torrie Wilson didn't seem to enjoy the win as much as she had enjoyed previous Kidman triumphs. She hurried into the ring, helped her man up, and hastily led him from the ring. Maybe it was Vampiro's bizarre appearance or his hypnotic stare that disturbed

her. Or maybe she was just concerned Kidman had been injured and wanted him to get checked by a doctor in the back. Or *maybe* Torrie realized the same thing thousands

of fans watching at home realized—that Vampiro had come that close to knocking the Filthy Animal down in the pecking order, and that under the makeup, dreadlocks, and tattoos, there's an incredible amount of skill and determination.

One night later in a rematch in Las Vegas, Vampiro connected with his nail in the coffin finisher to score a pinfall win over the former cruiserweight and World tag team champ. Just like that, The Insane Clown Posse's former sidekick became a legitimate title contender. Who expected it?

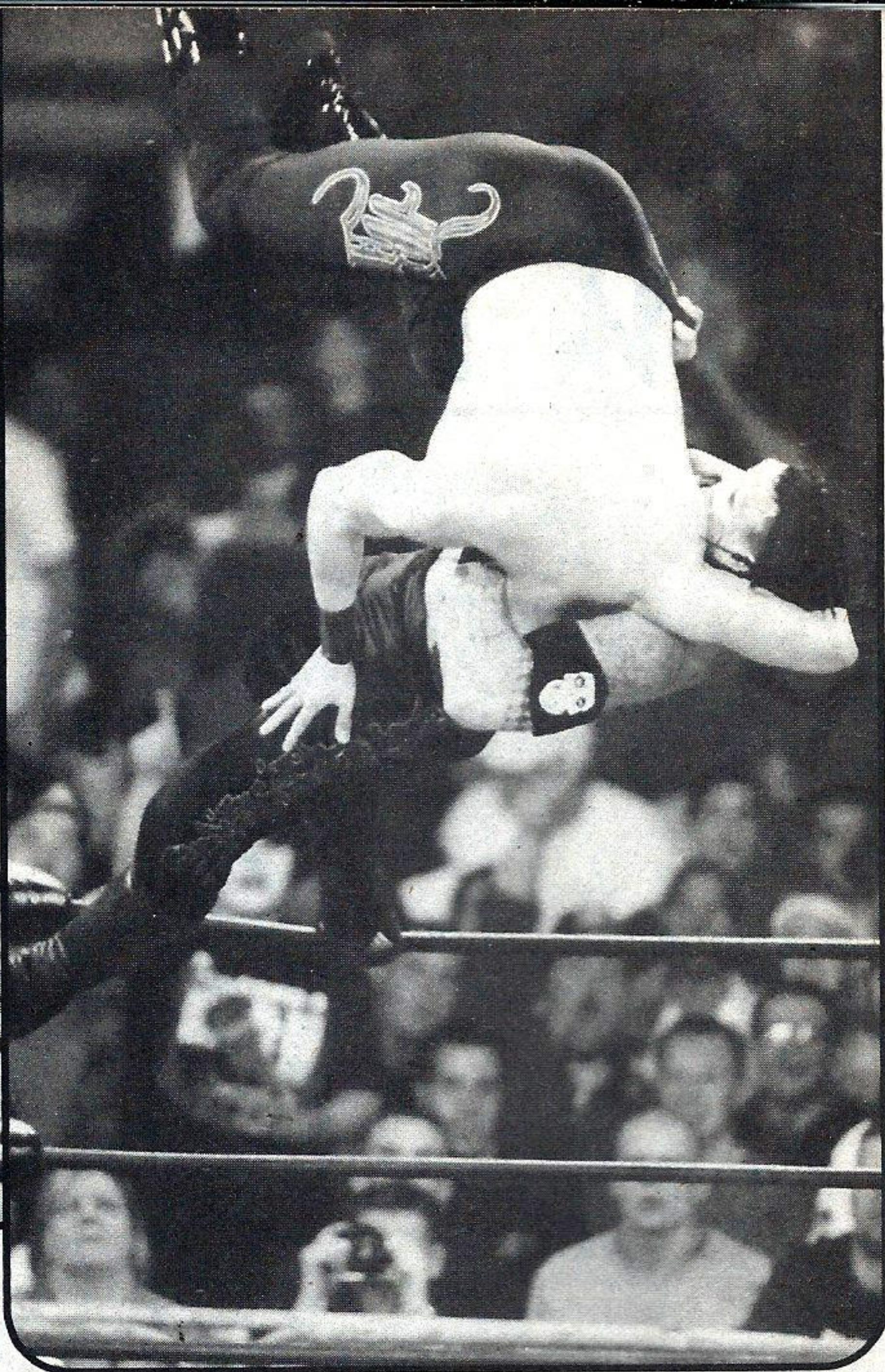
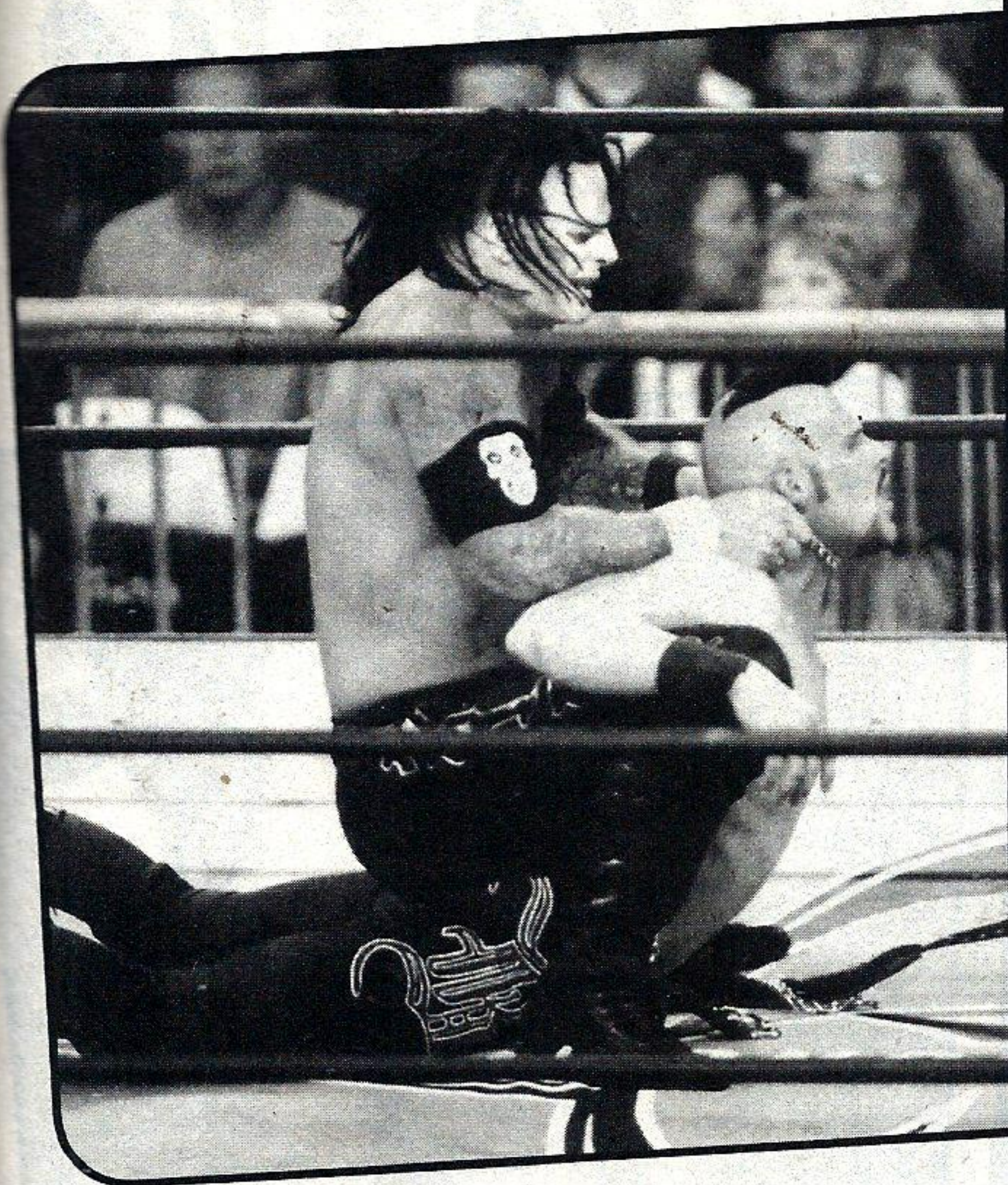
"Yeah, the kid looks nuts, and he may very well be nuts, but the fact is he's a great wrestler," Arn Anderson said. "I don't go for the Halloween outfit or the tattoos, but Vampiro has enough talent to go a long way in this business. He's in great shape, he has a solid wrestling and martial arts background, and he's always coming up with new defensive moves that put him back on the offensive. I think Vampiro has unlimited potential."

With wins over Berlyn and Kidman—and with Dean Malenko, Chris Benoit, Eddy Guerrero, and Shane Douglas all departed—Vampiro catapults into a higher bracket of contention, along with the



The Insane Clown Posse and Vampiro made for an intriguing threesome in the ring, but Vampiro is doing a lot better now that he has no strong allies in WCW.

Vampiro has gotten the best of Berlyn both on the mat (below) and in the air (right) and is clearly higher in the WCW pecking order than the German star. In fact, Vampiro ought to be getting shots at the U.S. title soon.



likes of Bam Bam Bigelow, Booker T, and Buff Bagwell.

In other words, Vampiro is now within striking distance of at least the U.S. title. Unlike most of his counterparts in WCW, though, Vampiro has managed to avoid becoming entangled in any long, pointless feuds. While Bigelow and Chris Canyon break bottles of champagne over each other's heads, Booker T is tied up with Stevie Ray and Big T, and Buff Bagwell tries to survive Dallas Page's wrath and maybe impress Kimberly, Vampiro can bide his time.

Would it shock anyone if he were to pull off an upset over Jeff Jarrett and become the number-two man in WCW? He's that close—and he's doing it on his own.

And what happens if Vampiro misses his opportunity with Jarrett? No problem. He's already had his share of setbacks, but after each loss (or defection of teammates), he

comes back stronger than before. Vampiro attributes much of his preparation to scouting his opponents.

"The most important thing is to keep your eyes open and never lose focus," Vampiro said. "I review hours of videotapes of just about everyone in WCW, and sometimes even that's not enough. I really enjoy doing it, though. Sometimes you can learn more from losing one match than by winning 10. Then you have to put what you've learned into place and not lose another match because of the same mistakes."

One thing Vampiro hasn't proven yet is that he can beat the big men. He has had his difficulties with The Wall and has never settled into a series of matches with either Sid Vicious or Kevin Nash. Will giving up more than 100 pounds take him off his game, or can he compensate by using his quickness, his hard, accurate

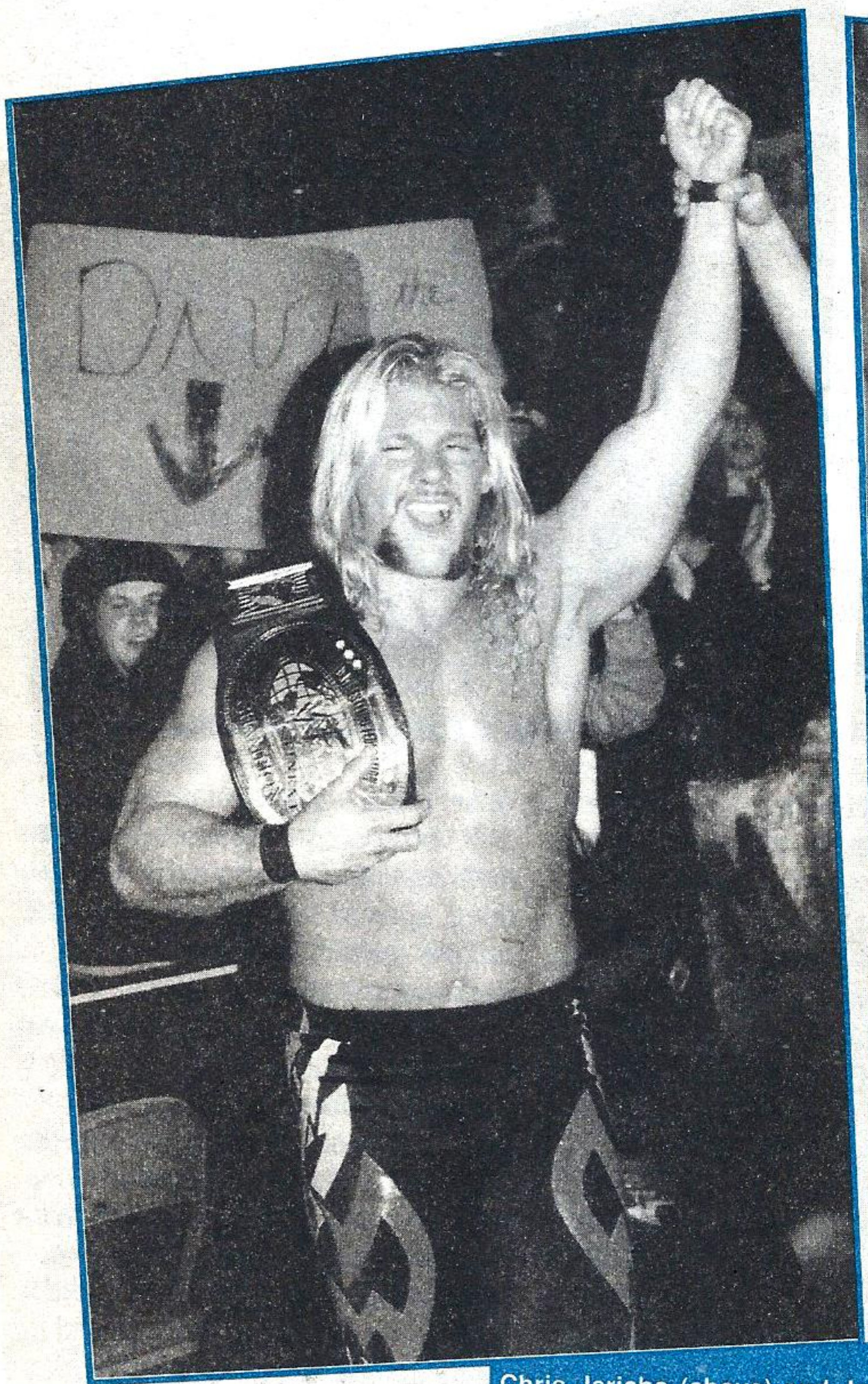
kicks, and his aerial maneuvers?

If Vampiro can wrestle the way he does against all comers the way he does against competitors who are roughly the same size as he is, he is destined to be a superstar.

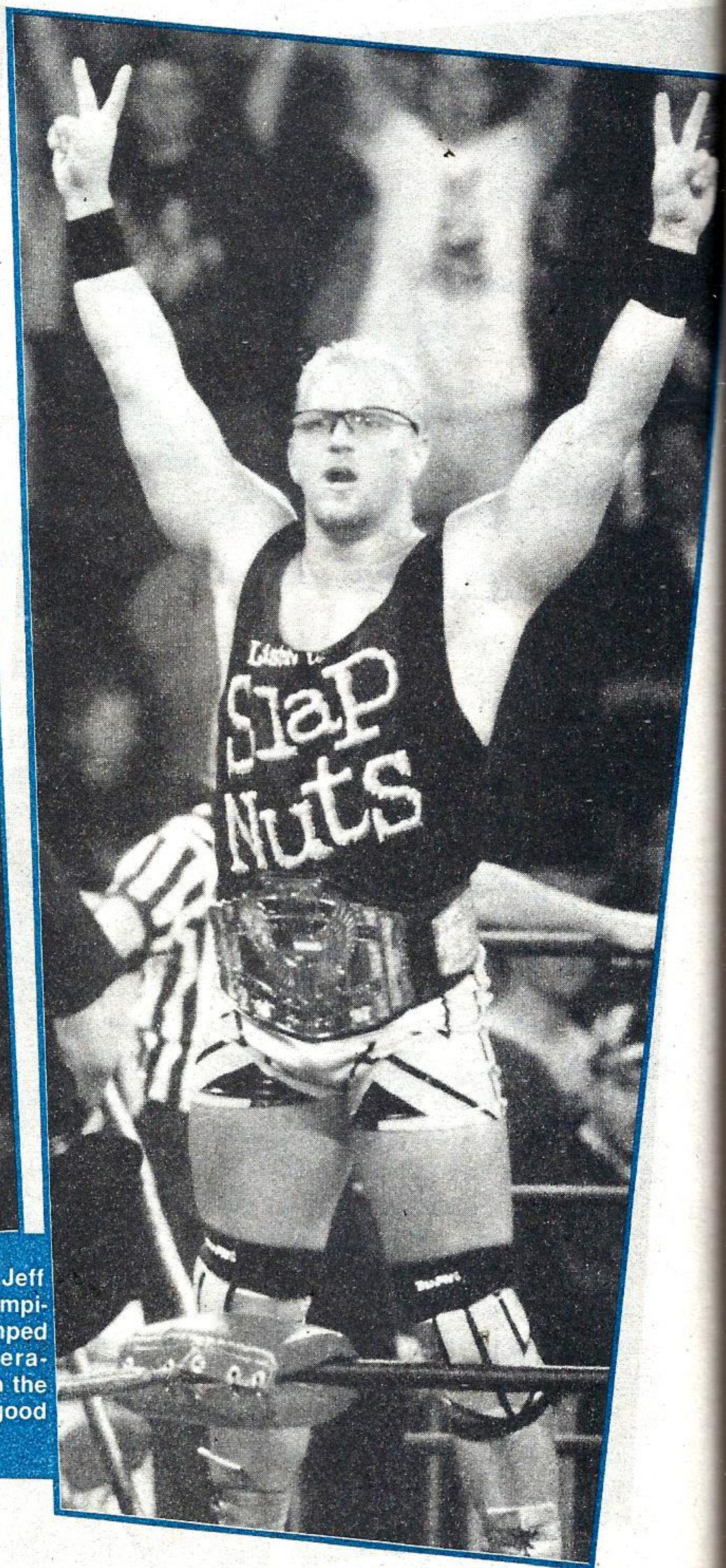
"I've been impressed by what I've seen of Vampiro so far, but I ain't seen all that much," Terry Funk offered. "Let's see what the kid can do in a cage. Let's see how many times he'll get back up after you kick him in the groin. Let's see if he can get back on his feet after one of Sid's choke-slams. That's the way I did it. I got my butt kicked day in and day out until I was tough enough to start kicking some butt of my own. Hey, the kid's gotta have some toughness to go around pretendin' to be a damn vampire."

Vampiro is no vampire. Everyone knows that. But at the rate he's going, he will be a champion very soon. □

Did They Make The



Chris Jericho (above) and Jeff Jarrett (right) both won championship gold when they jumped from their respective federations, but that doesn't mean the changes were necessarily good moves for both men.



RIGHT MOVE?

ANALYZING THE WRESTLERS WHO JUMPED PROMOTIONS

By Harry Burkett

THE YEAR 1999 and the beginning of 2000 were marked by several significant roster jumps among the Big Three. Moving from one federation to another is usually a shortcut to jump-starting a career, but is it always a good choice?

Change *can* be good for some people in some situations—but not for everybody. For example: Selling all your stock market shares before the 1929 crash would have been good. Conversely, selling all your shares in Microsoft back in the '80s would have been bad.

In wrestling terms: Vader leaving the WWF for All-Japan? Good. Vince Russo leaving the WWF for WCW?

Well, let's say the verdict isn't in yet.

In this feature, we analyze eight wrestlers who made career-changing decisions—and tell you whether they made the right ones.

CHRIS JERICO: His WCW tour of duty wasn't without success, with Jericho earning four cruiserweight titles and one TV

The Big Show has not set the WWF on its ear the way many expected he would after he jumped from WCW. Still, winning a World title is an impressive feat.

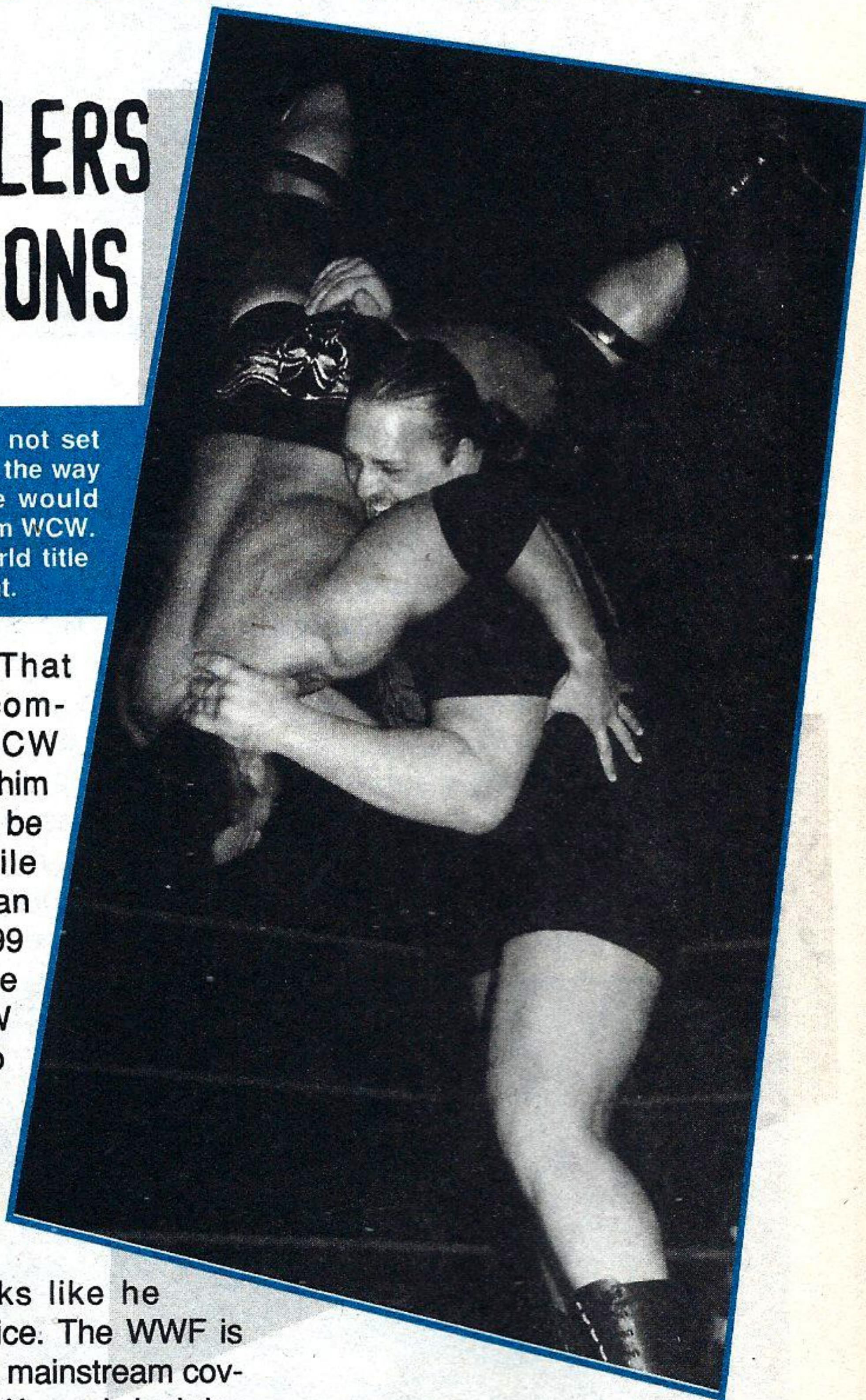
championship. That said, Jericho complained that WCW would never give him an opportunity to be a headliner. While recovering from an ankle injury in 1999 and nearing the end of his WCW contract, Jericho made the decision to jump to the WWF. He made his debut in August.

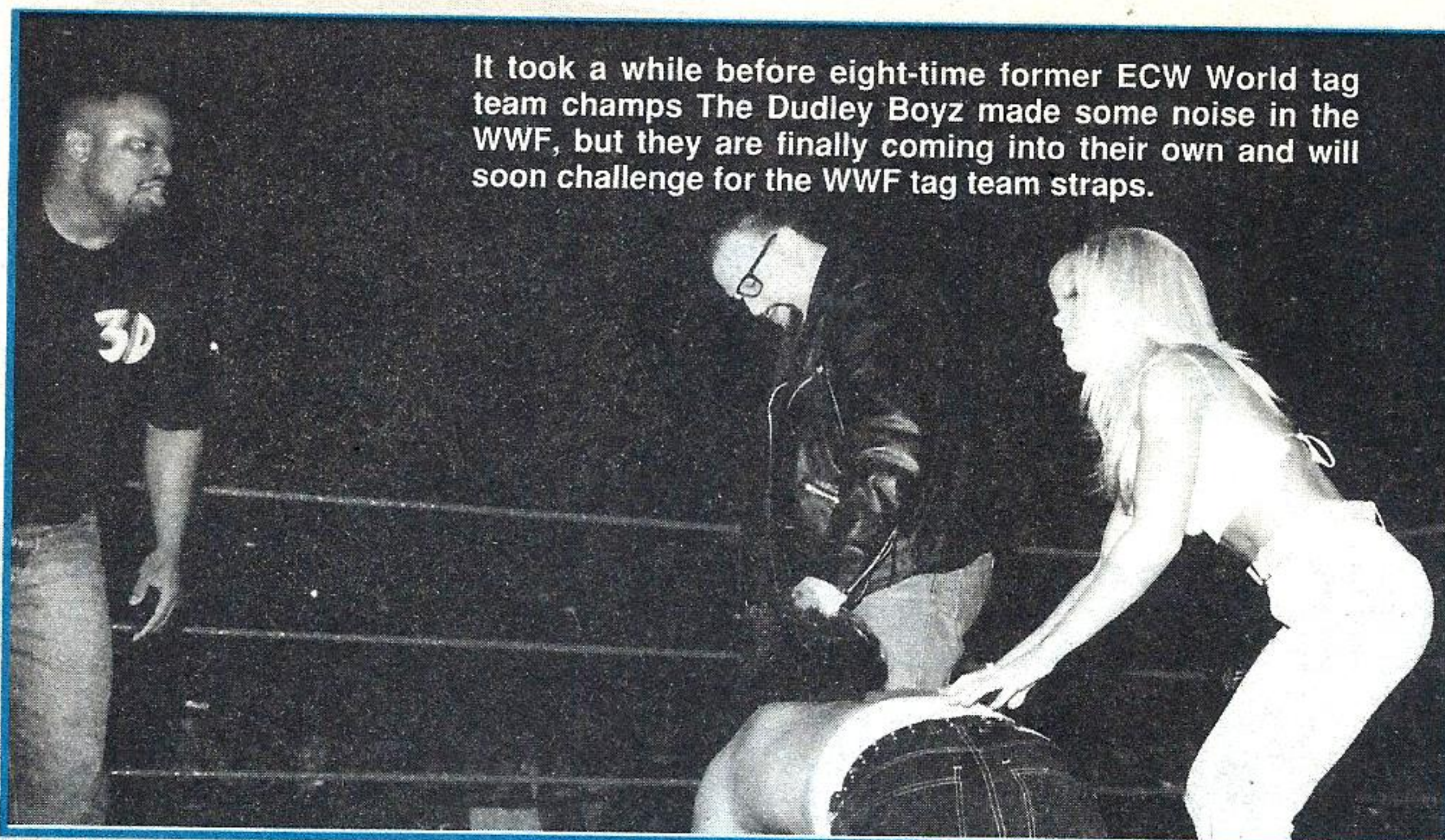
So far, it looks like he made a wise choice. The WWF is receiving far more mainstream coverage than WCW, and Jericho received the most grandiose welcome of any star in memory. We don't recall Marc Mero getting countdown clocks and a multimedia entrance presentation (music, Titan Tron video, and pyrotechnics). Jericho, now a two-time Intercontinental champion and with Chyna as backup, is ready to reach the next level. **GOOD MOVE.**

JEFF JARRETT: After 18 months of foundering in the WWF, he found

his niche in early-1999 by capturing the WWF World tag team title with Owen Hart. He and Debra earned their reputation as "The Golden Couple," and he won two more Intercontinental titles. His WWF career came to an abrupt end when Chyna defeated him for the I-C belt in a "Good Housekeeping" match in October. He jumped to WCW the following day.

In WCW, he positioned himself





It took a while before eight-time former ECW World tag team champs The Dudley Boyz made some noise in the WWF, but they are finally coming into their own and will soon challenge for the WWF tag team straps.

World title reign and we must say he's made a big showing. **GOOD MOVE.**

BUH BUH RAY AND D-VON DUDLEY: Since ECW struck a partnership with The Nashville Network, gaining a national cable show and merchandising support, the Dudleys had a good chance of becoming elite stars in that federation. They had already earned eight ECW tag team titles, and now that ECW has world title status, they could have finally earned the

as "The Chosen One" with the Powers-That-Be and became a key player in the New World Order. Right now, he's in the midst of a second U.S. title reign since his return. His future success depends entirely on whether the Powers-That-Be remain in power. That power appears to waning. **BAD MOVE.**

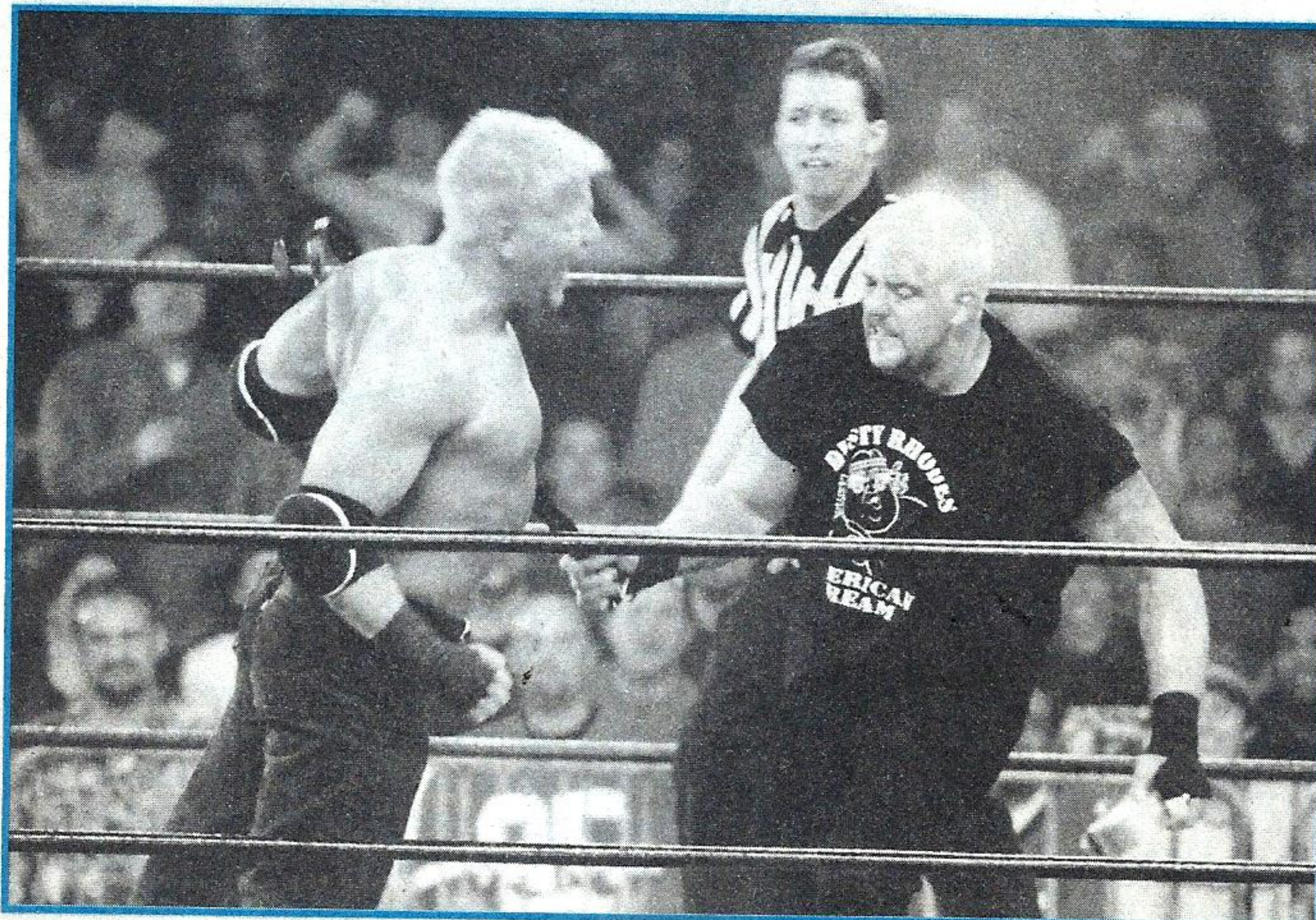
THE BIG SHOW: Paul Wight achieved extraordinary success as The Giant in 1996, capturing the WCW World title from Ric Flair and earning the *PWI* Wrestler and

Rookie of the Year Awards. But by the end of 1998, he was an overweight, chain-smoking caricature of his former self. Huffing and puffing replaced armdrags and dropkicks.

As The Big Show in the WWF, he hasn't shown many further signs of mental maturity—as he resorts to whining when events don't go his way. Working with WWF trainers, however, he lost a lot of weight, and his cardiovascular conditioning has vastly improved. Throw in a six-week

respect that had eluded them.

But they turned that down for a deal with the WWF. The only fear was whether they would be stuck at mid-card status. Obviously, the Dudleys are too determined and too volatile to let that happen. They're already making life miserable for The Hardy Boyz and Christian and Edge, two leading teams in the federation. Can a win over WWF World tag team champions The New Age Outlaws be far behind? **GOOD MOVE.**



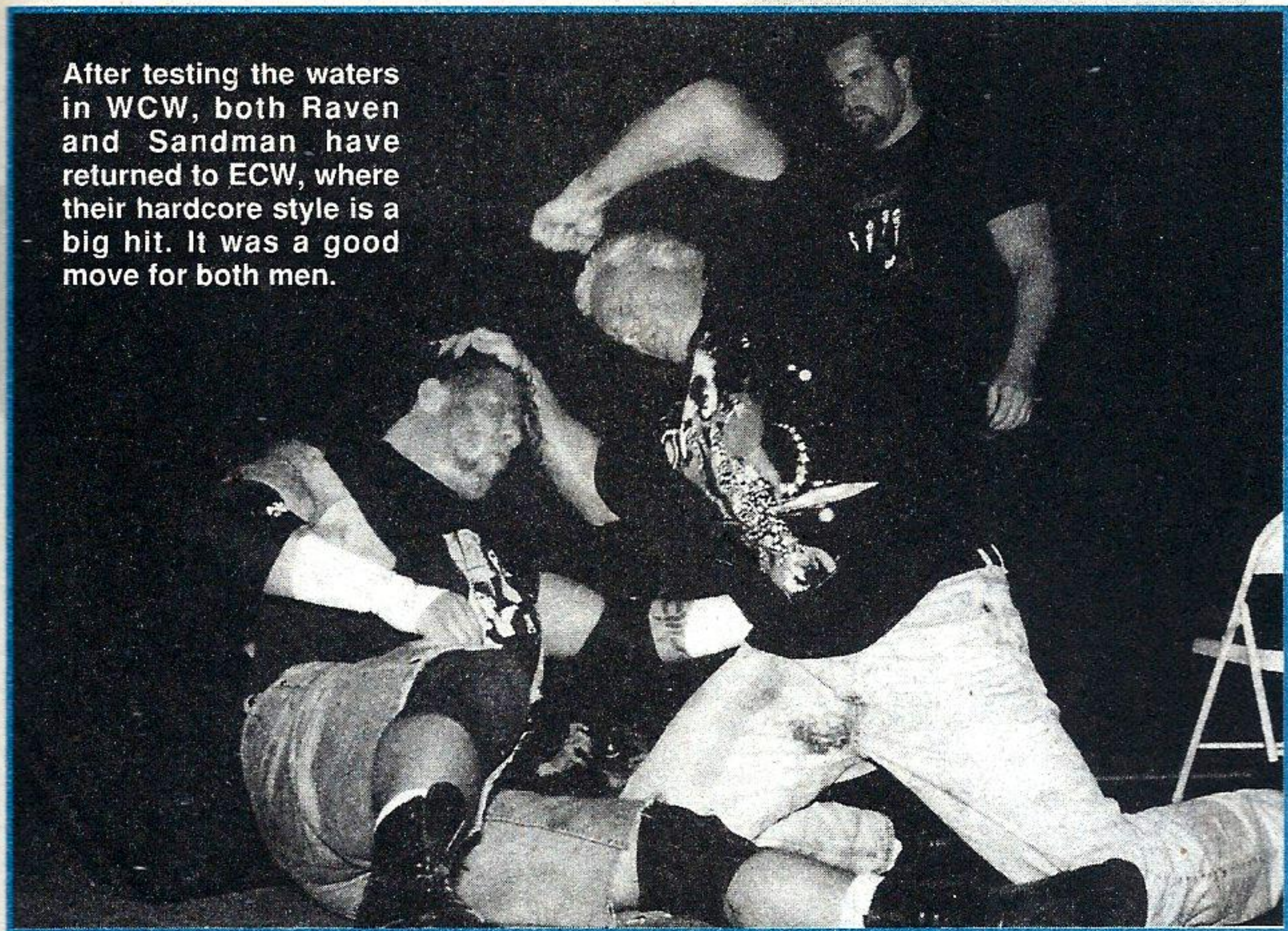
As Goldust, Dustin Rhodes career stagnated in the WWF, but at least he was once an Intercontinental champ. In WCW, Rhodes' career has ground to a halt. Bad move for Rhodes.

DUSTIN RHODES:

When his Goldust character stalled, he found religion and preached against the very things that were making the WWF so popular. When that failed, he was born again as Goldust and kept The Blue Meanie around as a sidekick. He held the Intercontinental title again briefly, but he and Meanie earned more strange stares than enthusiastic interest.

Jumping to WCW seemed like a good decision at first, since Dustin's father, Dusty Rhodes, was chairman of the Championship Committee. Also, the

After testing the waters in WCW, both Raven and Sandman have returned to ECW, where their hardcore style is a big hit. It was a good move for both men.



newly installed Powers-That-Be had played an instrumental part in developing Runnels' successful Goldust character. But, as Dustin's luck would have it, Dusty abruptly left WCW, and Runnels' new persona was scrapped. Now, instead of having a stale character, he has no character at all. **BAD MOVE.**

RAVEN: In the final analysis, Raven's decision to enter WCW two years ago was a good one. He formed The Flock, held the U.S. title for one day, and earned a national reputation. According to Raven, however, the creative aspect of his character grew stagnant. He remained dissatisfied and asked for (and got) his release from WCW.

He quickly jumped back to ECW and, along with enemy Tommy Dreamer, captured the World tag team title from the departing Dudleys. He and Dreamer have since dropped those belts to Justin Credible and Lance Storm, but Raven can still pursue any championship he wants.

As it is, he's content with playing head games with Dreamer and sitting on bathroom floors. Nice deal, if that's what he wants. **GOOD MOVE.**

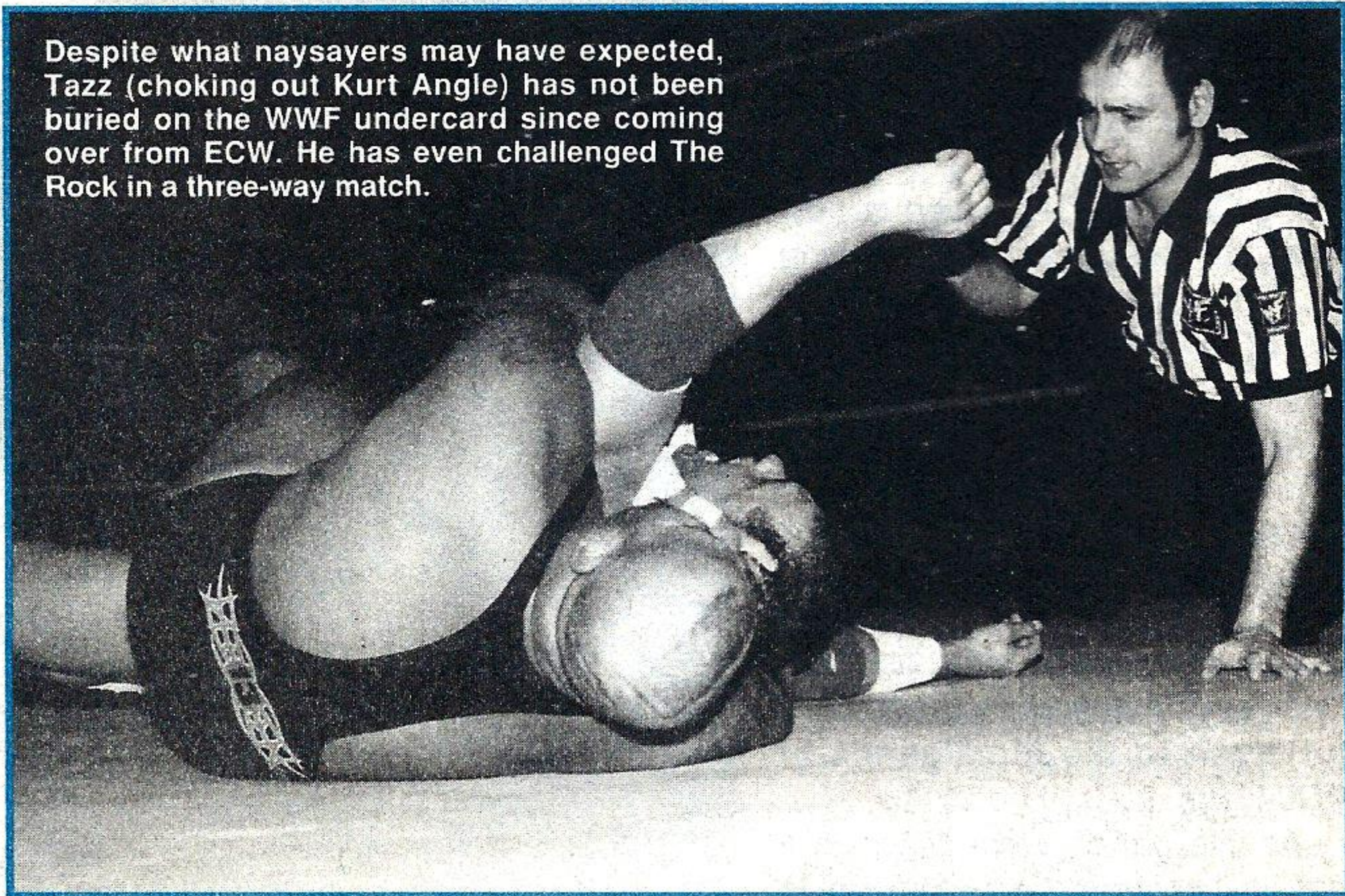
THE SANDMAN: Thanks to WCW, Hak was nothing more than a watered-down, sometimes-monotonous version of Sandman. He dominated a hardcore division that really wasn't all that hardcore. Unlike Raven, Hak can't even say WCW helped his character gain more notoriety.

The Sandman thrives in ECW's chaotic, anti-establishment environment. ECW is a place in which a Singapore cane is a weapon, not just a prop. The enthusiastic crowd response to Sandman's return to the ECW Arena was enough evidence that he made the right decision to go back. **GOOD MOVE.**

TAZZ: He was by no means foundering in ECW when he decided to jump to the WWF. After all, he was ECW's first recognized World champion. ECW had just gained the TNN contract, and it seemed like the federation was finally going to make the big time.

But Tazz' impressive performance in ECW made the WWF eager to recruit him. At first, there was great concern that Tazz would be relegated to mid-card status because of his relatively small size. Instead, Tazz benefited from several promos alluding to his debut at the Royal Rumble, choked out the undefeated Kurt Angle with a *katahaji-mi* in his first match, and even added that extra "z" to his name. **GOOD MOVE.** □

Despite what naysayers may have expected, Tazz (choking out Kurt Angle) has not been buried on the WWF undercard since coming over from ECW. He has even challenged The Rock in a three-way match.



MIKE AWESOME

VS.

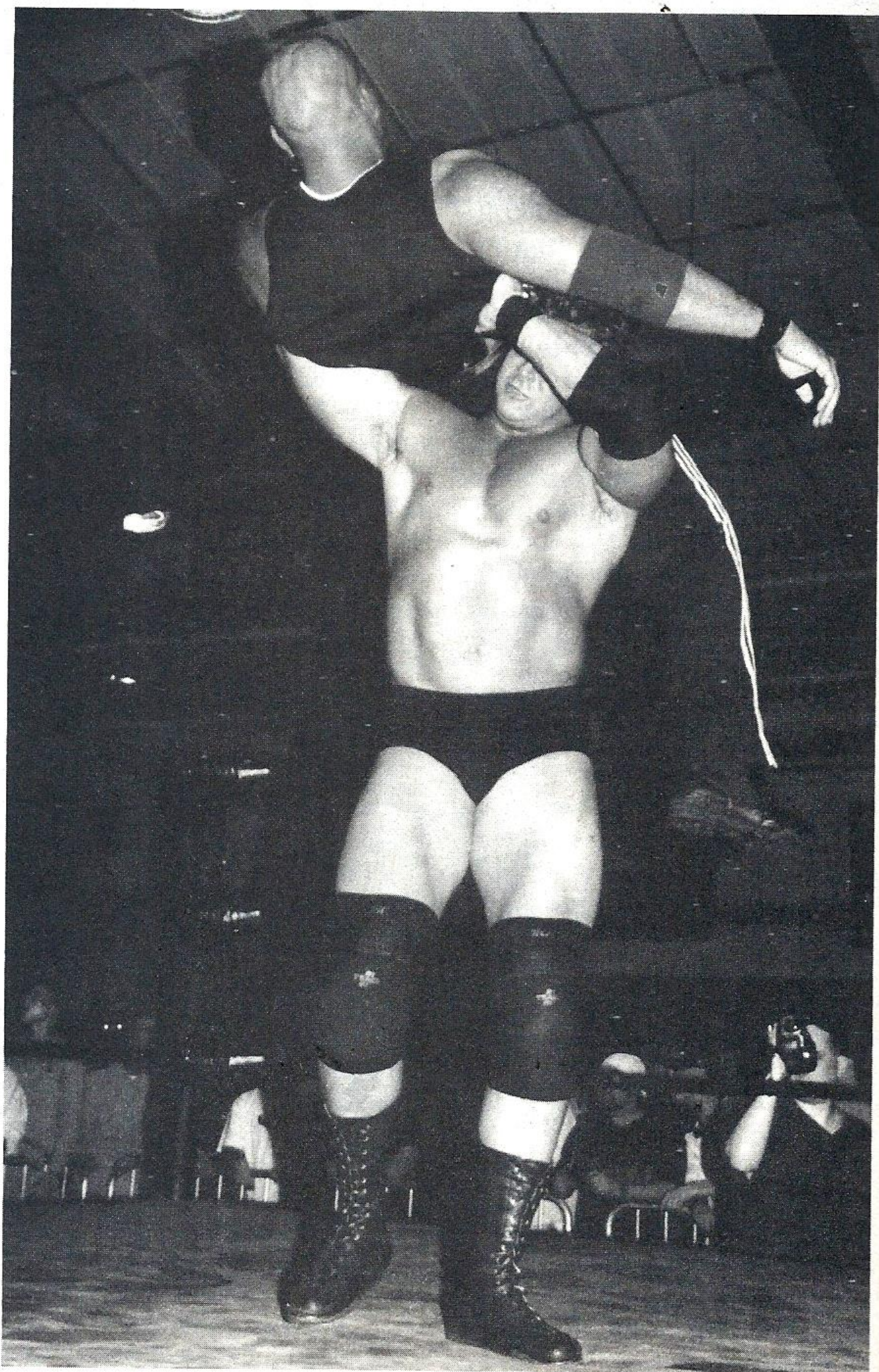
Our Preview & Analysis Of The ECW Superbout

For years, Rob Van Dam has been touted as the future of ECW. Few people disputed that notion. Then Mike Awesome arrived from nowhere and captured the World title. The showdown between these two must happen—and this is how we see the contest

By Harry Burkett

ROB VAN DAM, who is now on the verge of celebrating the two-year anniversary of his ECW TV title win, has been offended by comments made by World champion Mike Awesome. The World champ has challenged Van Dam's status as ECW's "Whole Show." He has ridiculed the "piece of tin" TV belt Van Dam wears around his waist. Van Dam says Awesome's tirades are an insult to the intelligence of ECW fans.

As this war of words builds to a physical confrontation, everyone is



ROB VAN DAM!

Mike Awesome's power is unrivaled in ECW. So is Rob Van Dam's athleticism. When it comes time for the two to meet, who will reign supreme? Will it be Awesome with his Awesome bomb (opposite page), or Van Dam with his split-legged moonsault (below)?



Photos by Frank Vitucci & George Tahinos

being asked what he thinks of the inevitable matchup. Most ECW fans are in the court of RVD. Not surprisingly, most of the wrestlers backstage refused comment.

There will come a time when the talking is finished and these two warriors must step into the ring. Here is our analysis of the combatants in nine categories:

OFFENSE

Awesome: He uses a rough-house style, mixing punches with clotheslines at the opening bell. It is particularly important for Van Dam to avoid kicks to the midsection, because those are clearly Awesome's setup to his Awesome bomb.

Van Dam: RVD's offense is more dynamic than Awesome's, but the question is whether it's more effective. Van Dam will attempt to confuse Awesome with back kicks, roundhouse kicks, and Asai moonsaults. Considering Awesome's vast experience in Japan, this is a style the ECW World champ has encountered many times before. Van Dam, however, is one of the sport's true innovators. Expect him to debut some new maneuvers in the course of the bout.

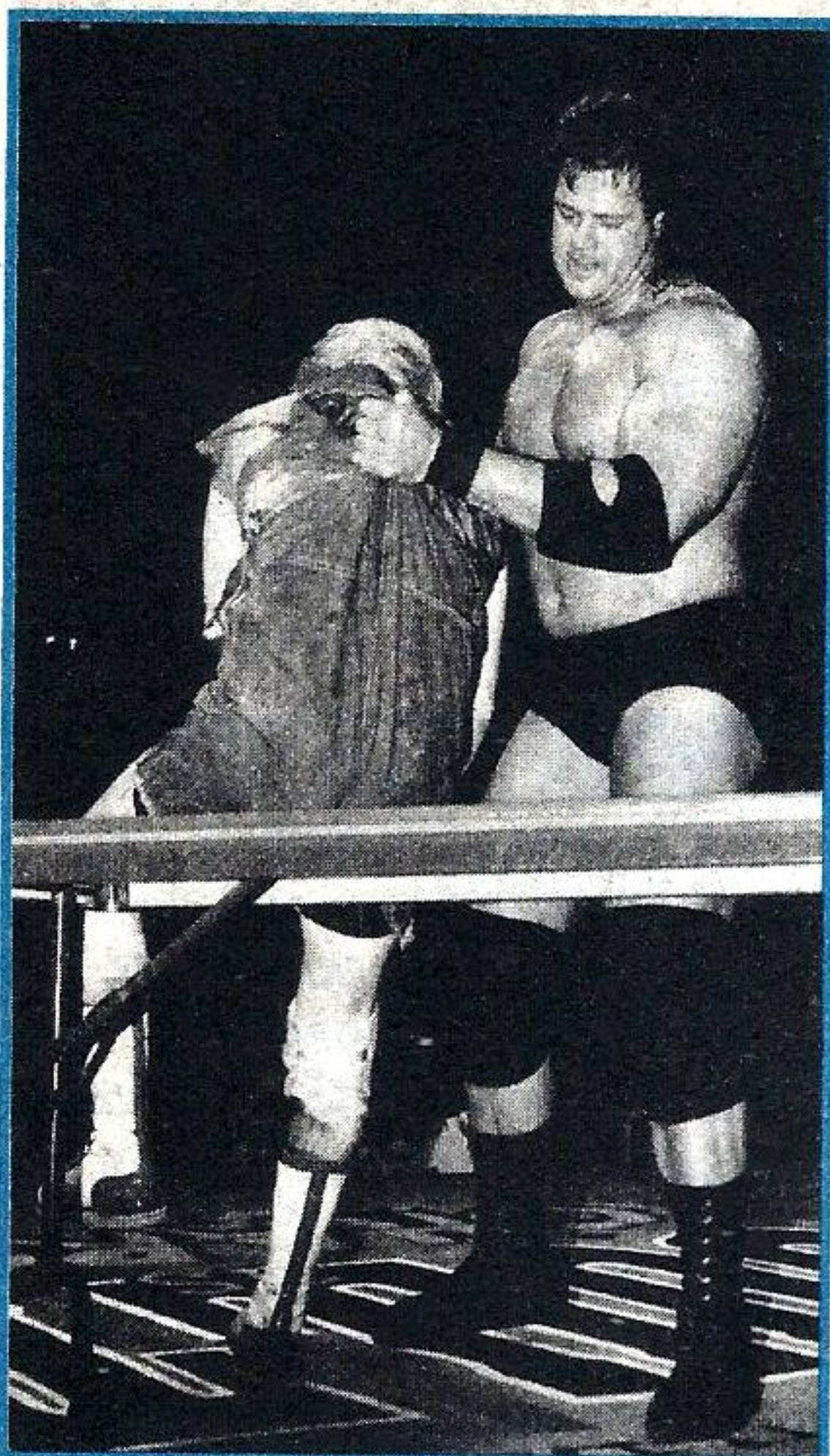
ADVANTAGE: Van Dam

DEFENSE

Awesome: Frankly, Awesome isn't accustomed to needing any. What if Van Dam catches Awesome in a side headlock? Awesome can pick him up and throw him off. A sleeperhold? Awesome will ram RVD's back into the corner turnbuckles. Awesome has the benefit of size to compensate for his lack of defensive scientific skills.

Van Dam: He has the unique ability to counteract a foe's offense with offensive moves of his own. Awesome loves to use chairs; Van Dam will count on that in order to use the Van Daminator. Odds are, Van Dam has already figured out a way to counter the Awesome bomb with a huracanrana.

ADVANTAGE: Awesome



Awesome is a fearless warrior—but that's not necessarily a good thing. He wasted valuable time by using tables in his matches with Spike Dudley. Van Dam would capitalize on such a mistake.

CONDITIONING

Awesome: What makes Mike awesome? It's his extraordinary blend of height, weight, and agility. He is easily the most powerful competitor in ECW. He has every conceivable advantage in this category.

Van Dam: RVD possesses excellent conditioning. However, if a 237-pounder's conditioning is pitted against a 285-pounder's conditioning, the big man will win every time. Van Dam's toughness, though, is often underestimated. He won several tough-man contests in his home state of Michigan before turning pro. He doesn't have the conditioning to overcome Awesome, but he might have the fortitude to survive him.

ADVANTAGE: Van Dam.

SPEED

Awesome: If he were matched against a competitor of equal size, Awesome would probably have the speed advantage.

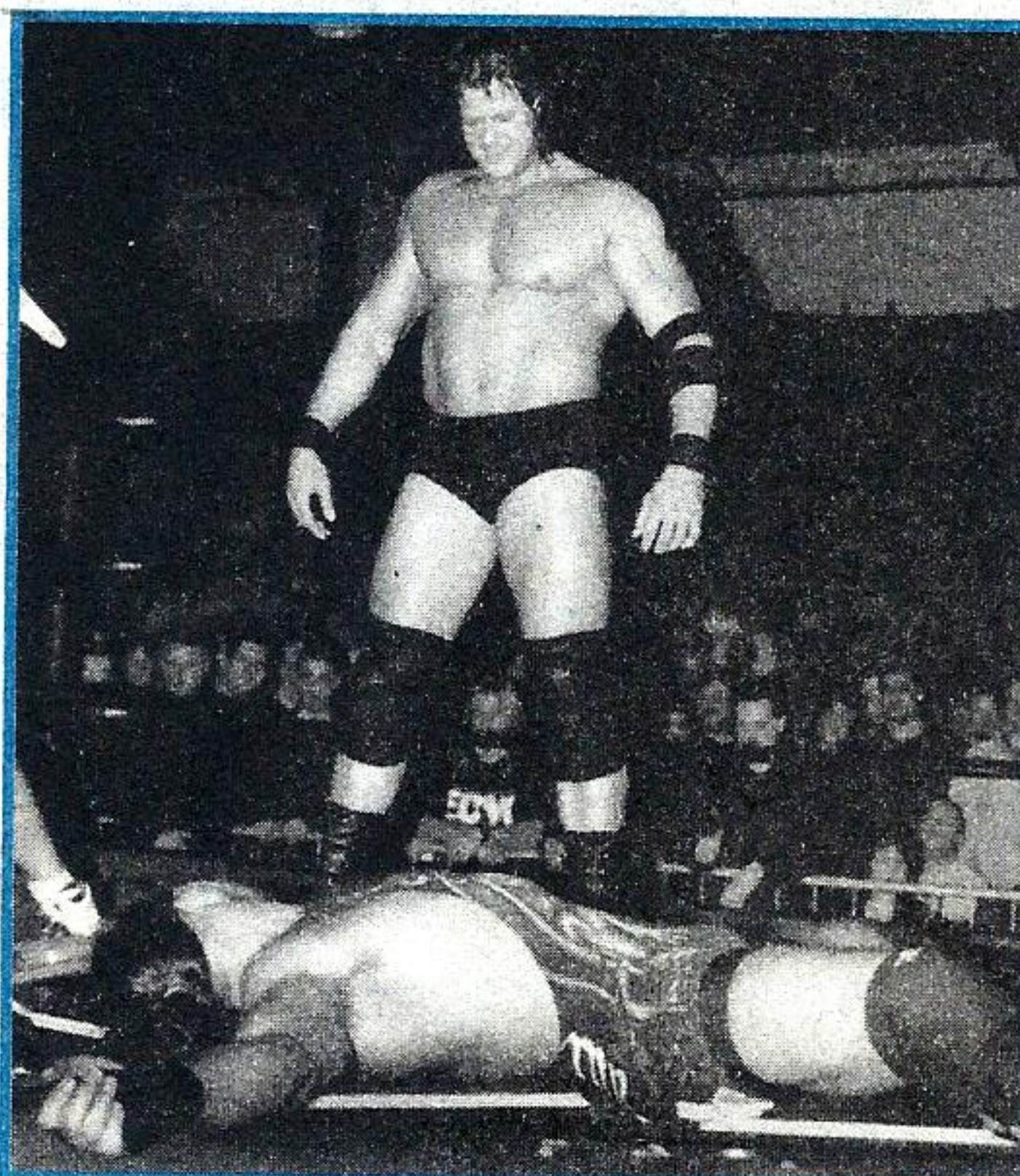
But Awesome's primary advantage in ECW—his size—can also be his biggest weakness. Awesome must be willing to slow the match down, using headlocks, armlocks, and other mat holds. He hasn't shown the temperament to do that so far.

Van Dam: Thanks to his kickboxing background, Van Dam's wrestling style is based on speed and, more importantly, timing. Van Dam doesn't believe in wasted moves. He searches for an opening and quickly decides on the most appropriate high-impact maneuver. For Van Dam, the utilization of speed is as much a mental process as it is a physical one.

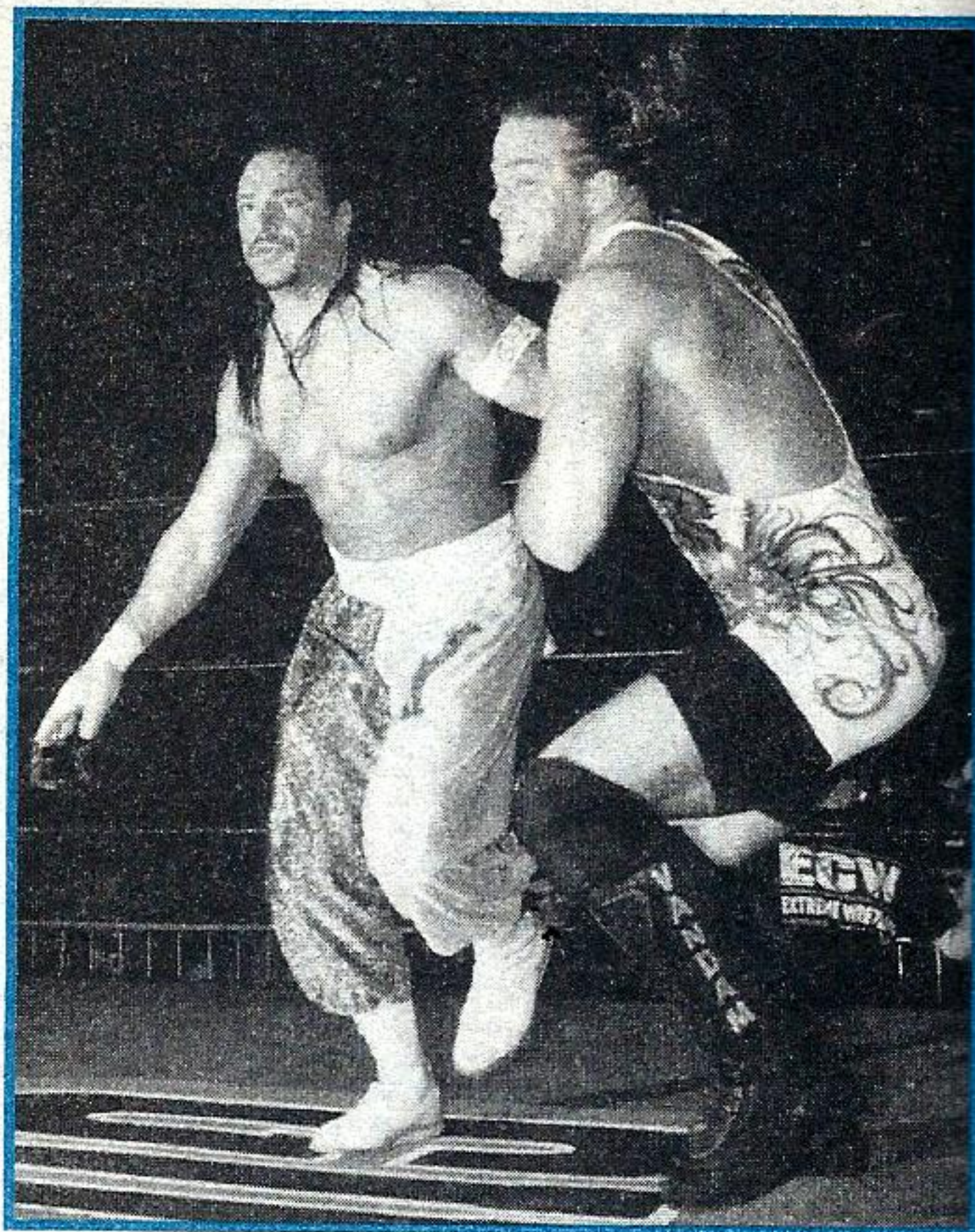
ADVANTAGE: Van Dam.

STAMINA

Awesome: The ECW World champion demonstrated his endurance in his marathon battles against Masato Tanaka. He absorbed one chair shot after another and recovered from countless tumbles through the ropes and to the arena floor. A match against Van



Awesome got the best of RVD during a confrontation at the ECW Arena in January. This will only make Van Dam more intent on beating Awesome once they inevitably wrestle each other.



As his matches with Sabu have shown, Van Dam is fast—both physically and mentally. His in-ring speed will allow him to outrun the champ, and his mental prowess will allow him to adjust to Awesome throughout the match.

Dam will require a different kind of endurance and require him to stay in motion the entire time he's in the ring. He hasn't been tested in that capacity yet, but there's no reason to believe he wouldn't fare well.

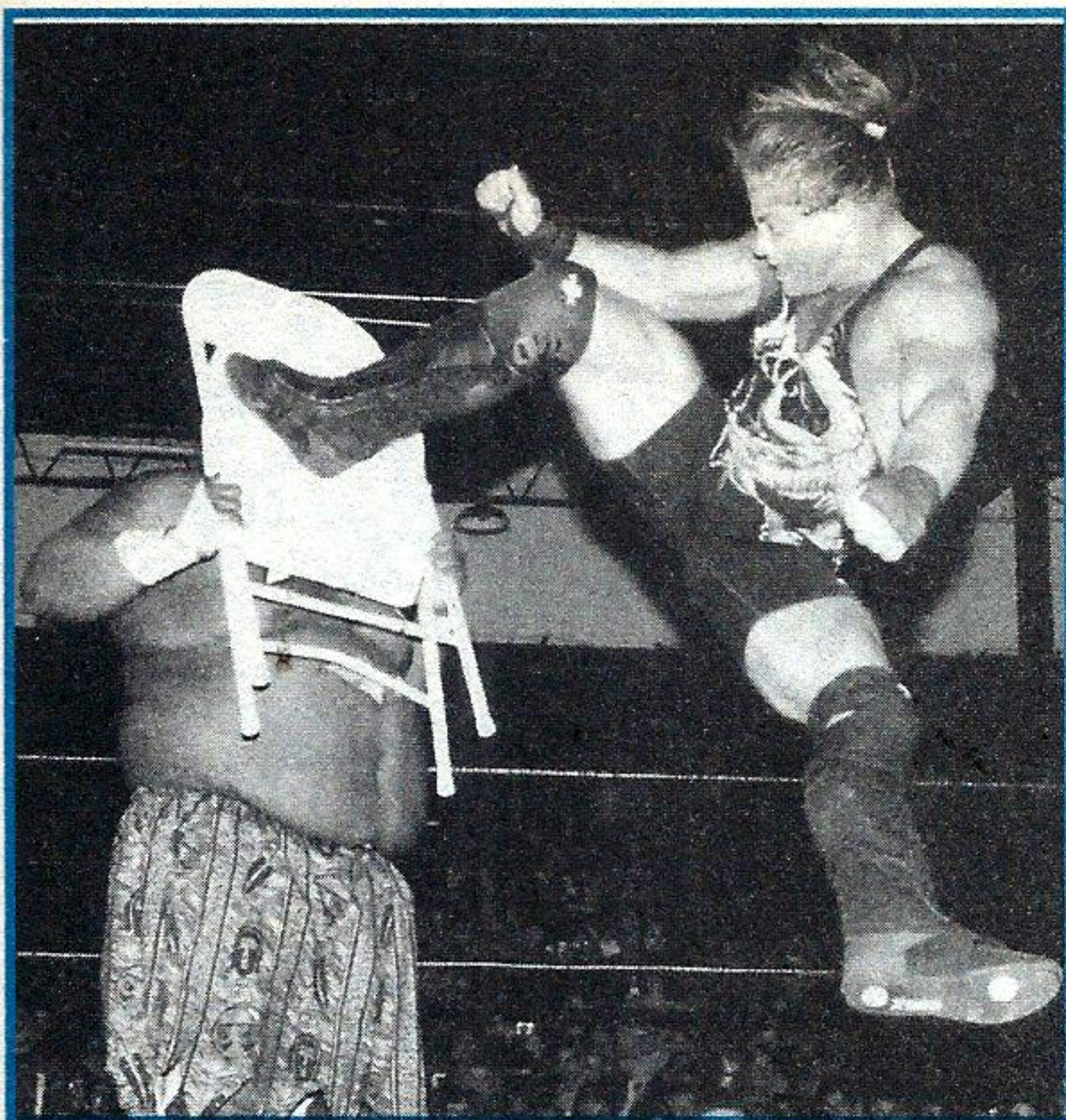
Van Dam: His year-long struggle against Jerry Lynn was excellent preparation for his looming battle with Awesome. The fact that Van Dam didn't lose to a foe 20 pounds lighter proves he would have no problem keeping pace with the much heavier ECW champ.

ADVANTAGE: Van Dam.

AERIAL ABILITY

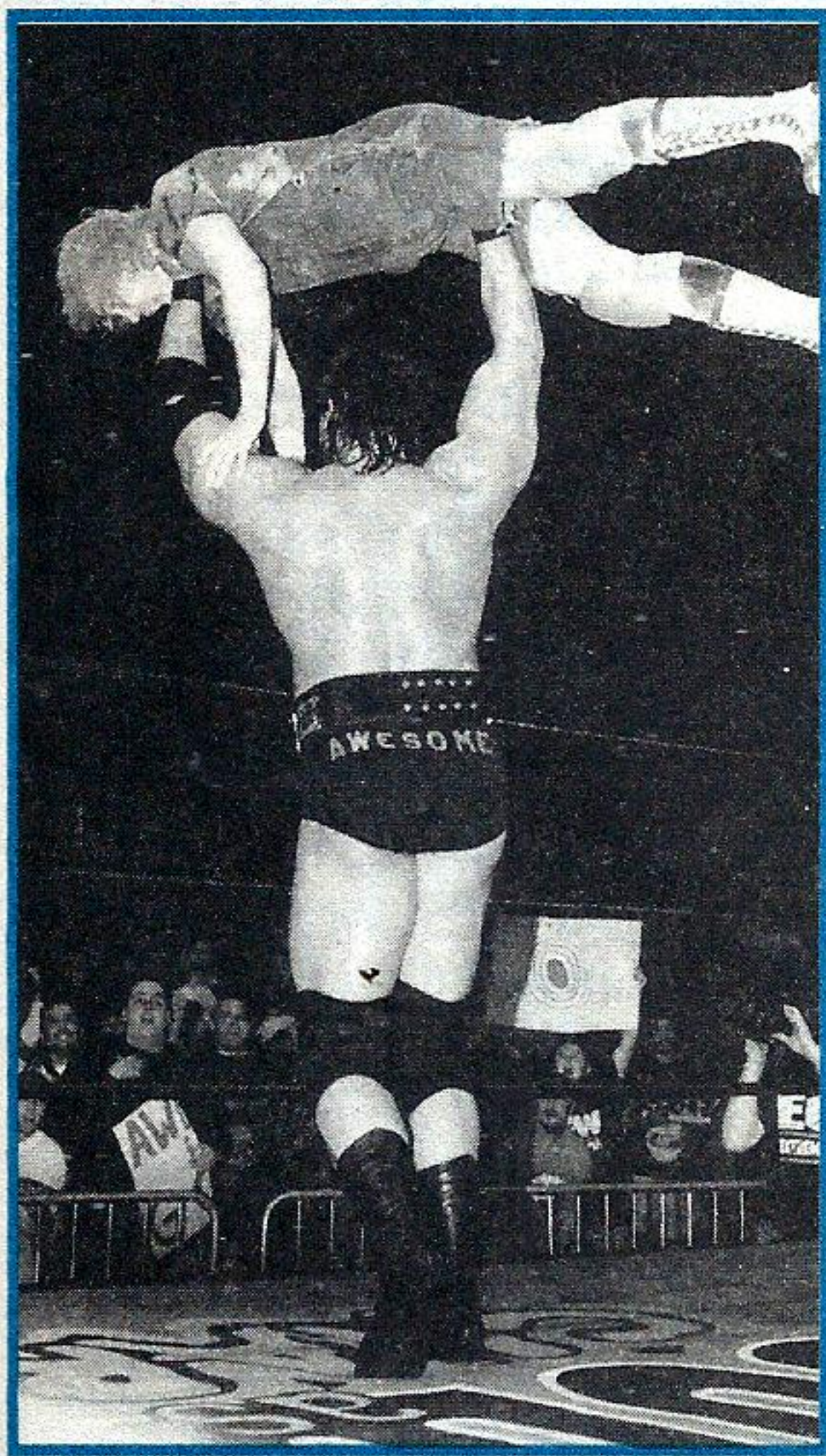
Awesome: He has demonstrated the ability to throw dropkicks and execute huracanranas late into a match. That's amazing stuff, but he will always be a second or two behind Van Dam. He must resist the temptation to impress Van Dam with his high-flying skills—or he will lose to a man far superior in that category.

Van Dam: He can use high-flying moves 20 minutes into a match without succumbing to



Van Dam's Van Daminator is one of the sport's most devastating maneuvers. Because Awesome is a big fan of introducing chairs into his matches, RVD would have many opportunities to deliver his face-crunching maneuver.

fatigue. That is his key advantage over Awesome. The split-legged moonsault, if delivered at the right time, could keep Awesome down for the three-count.



Yes, Awesome would be able to lift Van Dam up this easily, too—if he could catch him, that is. Of course, Awesome did catch Spike Dudley easily enough, and it can be argued that little Spike is even a hair faster than RVD.

ADVANTAGE: Van Dam

POWER

Awesome: As was the case in his matches against Spike Dudley, Awesome will try to obliterate Van Dam with devastating power maneuvers. Backbreakers, bodyslams, and Awesome bombs will dominate his offense. Van Dam must figure out counters to these trademark Awesome moves before their showdown. In all

likelihood, he will.

Van Dam: The TV champion doesn't utilize his strength in the form of power moves alone, other than the occasional bodyslam. RVD is too smart to engage Awesome in tests of strength, unless it's to sucker him into making a dumb move.

ADVANTAGE: Awesome

INTANGIBLES

Awesome: His ability to co-exist with manager Jeff Jones will be a deciding factor. Awesome has proven he doesn't need Jones' tutelage to succeed in a match, but tension between the two could lead

to a hot-headed, temperamental champion. Unbridled anger would be enough to make Awesome lose.

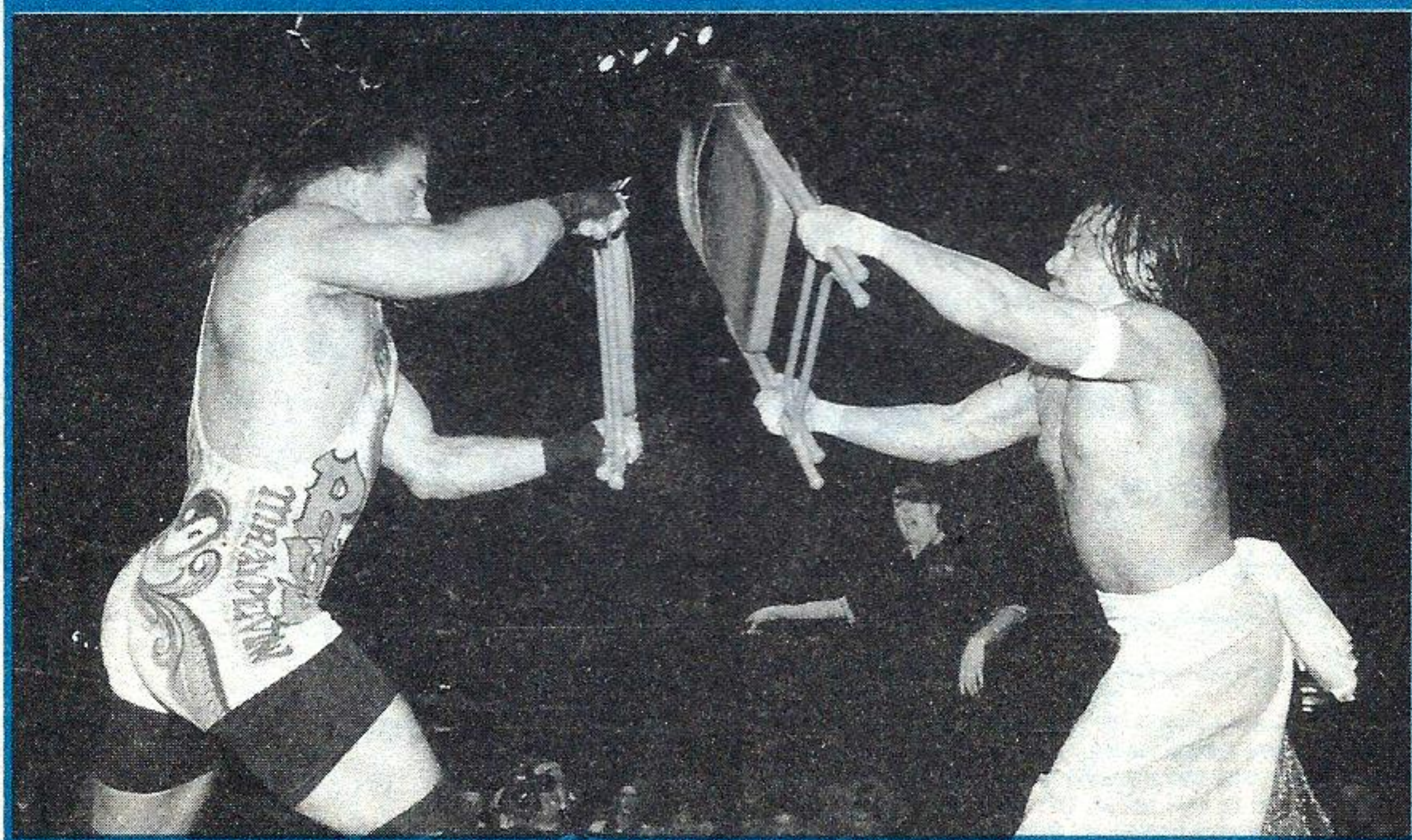
Van Dam: Fortunately for Van Dam, manager Bill Alfonso has proven his loyalty. However, RVD must resist the temptation to show off in front of his fans. He seems to take delight in provoking Awesome, but he must possess a serious game face when the bell rings.

ADVANTAGE: Even

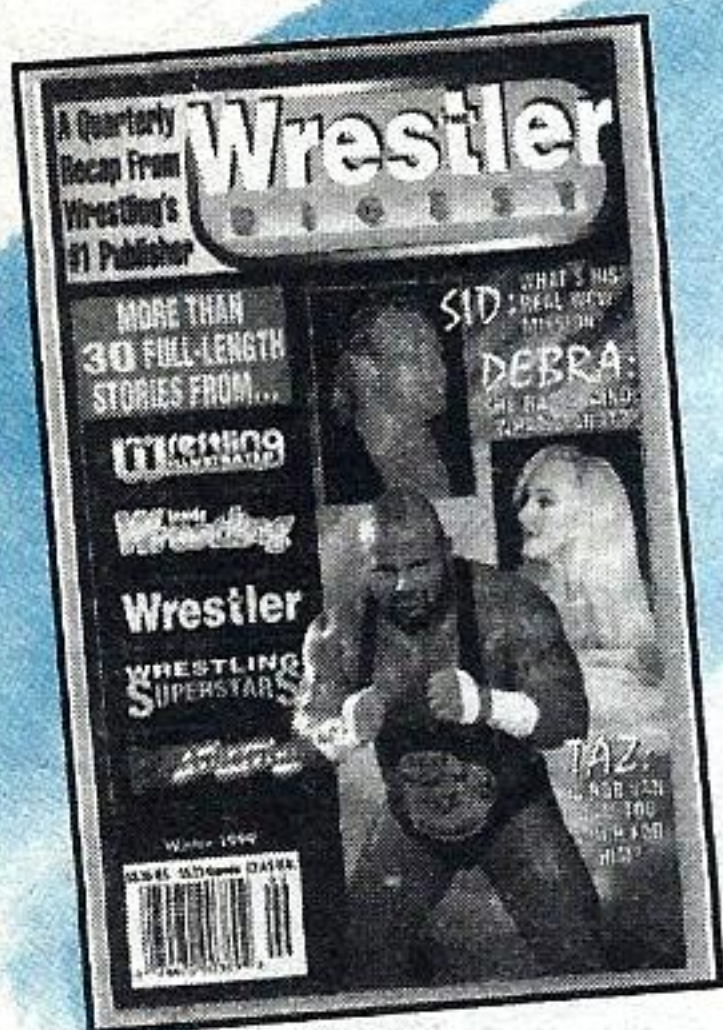
THE OUTCOME

Mike Awesome vs. Rob Van Dam has the potential to be a Match of the Year candidate. Rarely have two fantastic athletes with such different styles had so much on the line. Awesome is probably obsessing about this match at this very moment. He's no doubt watching tapes of Van Dam and talking to RVD's previous opponents. Is Van Dam too cocky to prepare so thoroughly? He might be, but we doubt it. Our prediction: Van Dam has been biding his time as the ECW TV champion. He has been waiting for an opening, for a moment of weakness on the part of the World champion—no matter who it has been—for the last two years. Apparently he has seen something in Awesome's game that has provoked him into action. He will be the next ECW World champion. □

Dueling chairs is a scene reminiscent of the Van Dam-Sabu wars. Van Dam would be wrong to enter into a chair contest with Awesome, however. Awesome would win easily. RVD should let the Van Daminator come and not force the issue.



A LOT TO DIGEST!



We hope you have a lot of time on your hands. Because it's going to take you a while to read through these 132-page, digest-sized issues! *The Wrestler Digest* and *Inside Wrestling Digest* contain more than 30 stories in each issue, all culled from the previous three months worth of articles in your favorite magazines, *Pro Wrestling Illustrated*, *The Wrestler*, *Inside Wrestling*, *Wrestle America*, and *Wrestling Superstars*.

Now back issues of *The Wrestler Digest* and *Inside Wrestling Digest* are available in limited quantities.

Please send me the back issues I have checked off below. I have enclosed a \$5 check or money order for each issue as payment in full.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Wrestler Digest | Inside Wrestling Digest |
| ☐ Winter 1997 | ☐ Spring 1998 |
| ☐ Spring 1998 | ☐ Winter 1998 |
| ☐ Fall 1998 | ☐ Spring 1999 |
| ☐ Summer 1999 | ☐ Fall 1999 |
| ☐ Winter 1999 | |

Send To:
LONDON PUBLISHING CO.
P.O. BOX 910
FT. WASHINGTON, PA 19034

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____

For all orders outside the U.S., you must add \$1.50 for every back issue to be sent via surface mail, and \$3.00 for every back issue to be sent airmail. Int'l money order in U.S. funds only. Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery.

ONLY
\$5
EACH

YOUR LETTERS

(Continued from page 5)

ters, and he's finally getting the recognition he deserves as one of the best technical wrestlers in the world. I'm just as glad that he's no longer taking crap from everyone in ECW. Maybe if he convinces Little Guido to shed that stupid FBI gimmick and rely solely on his own formidable wrestling skills, we could have a new tag team in the ECW mix.

JON POTTS
Millington, TN

WHAT WAS HE THINKING?

David Flair is hardcore? What was Will Welsh thinking when he wrote that garbage in "No Holds Barred" (March 2000)?

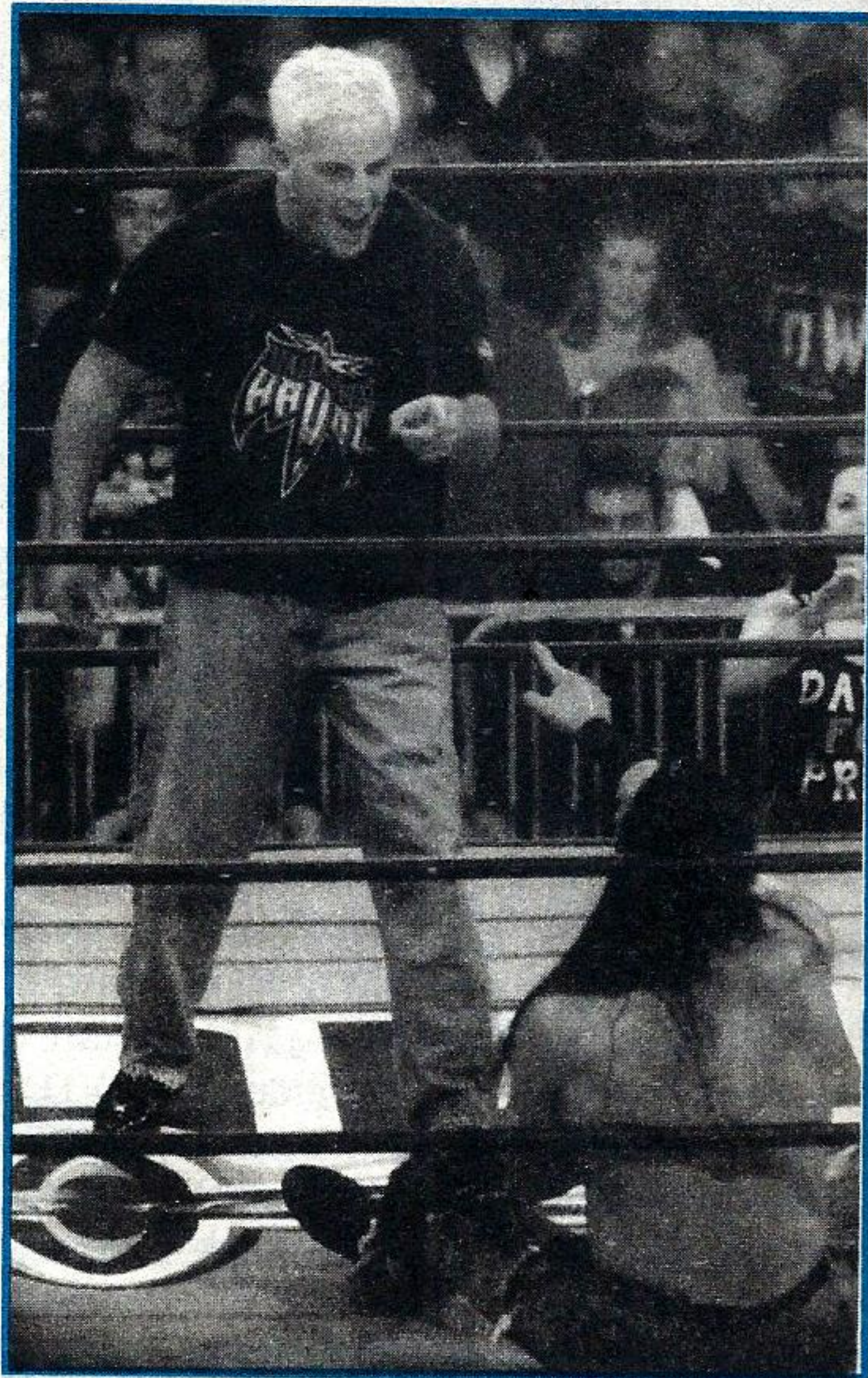
I doubt David Flair is making it in WCW because of his toughness. It's more likely that his father is pulling some strings for him in WCW. Maybe the next time Welsh decides to write about hardcore wrestlers, he'll actually talk about hardcore wrestlers like Bam Bam Bigelow or The Dudley Boyz or Sabu, not some under-qualified geek who just happens to be the son of a very famous wrestler.

GERALD HOUSTON
Lexington, WA

WARNING! WARNING!

As a long-time fan of the WWF, I feel the federation must tone down the vulgarity of its product if it hopes to succeed in new ventures such as WWF radio and WWF New York.

Although the WWF is at the peak of its popularity, having women bare their breasts on pay-



David Flair is hardcore. Will Welsh actually wrote that in a recent "No Holds Barred" column. Reader Gerald Houston disagrees. And, quite frankly, so do we.

per-view is offensive to a large portion of the audience. If this type of smut continues, could a backlash be far behind?

What happens when viewers decide they do not care to patronize a company that exploits women to pad its pay-per-view buy rates? Their dollars may not go to WCW or ECW, but they will certainly *not* go to the WWF.

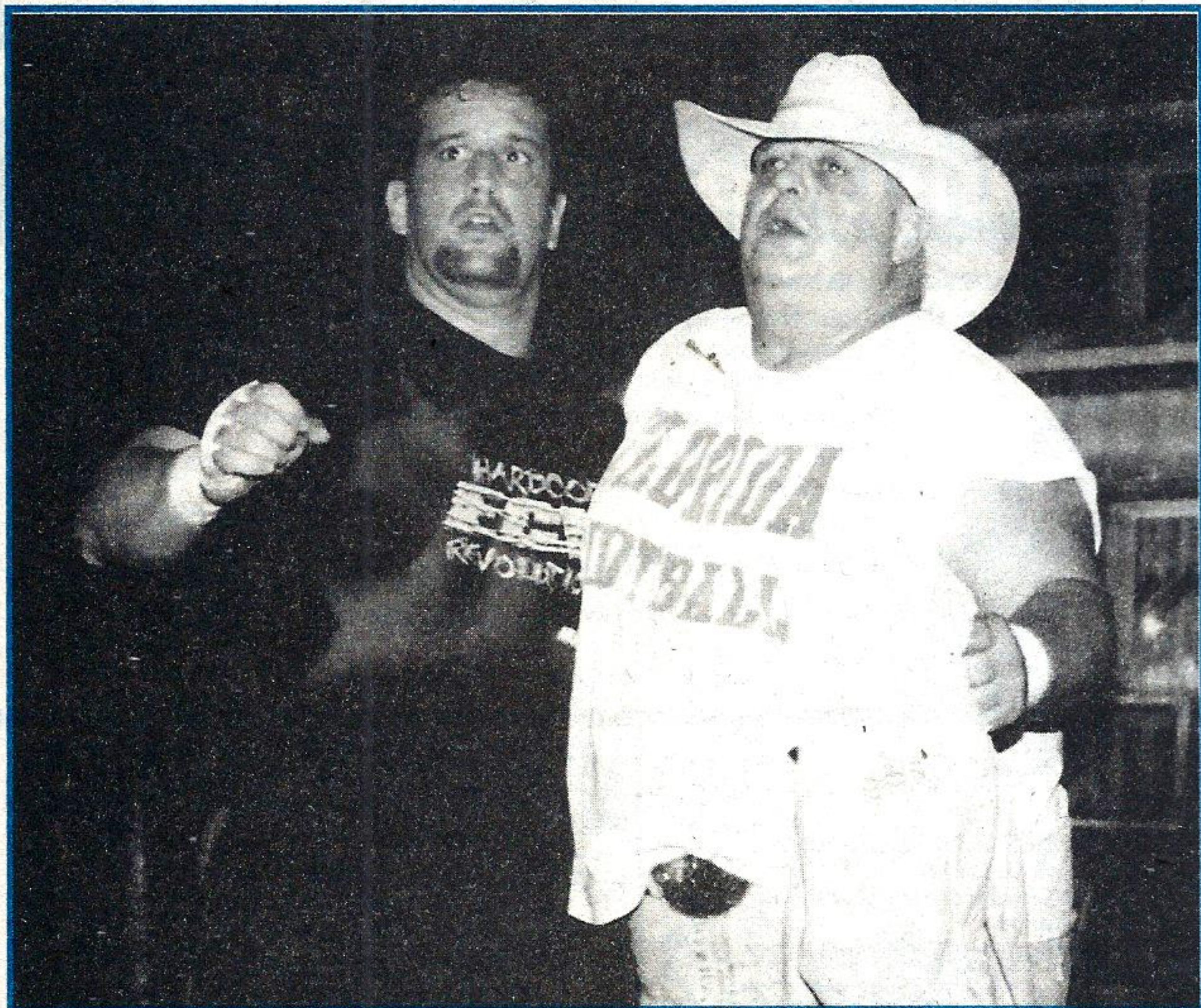
A little common sense regarding this matter could go a long way.

KARI WEYMOUTH
Youngsville, LA ☐

Send YOUR LETTERS to:
Box 1148, Ft. Washington, PA 19034
Or e-mail letters to:
yourletters@aol.com

WHAT'S HAPPENING

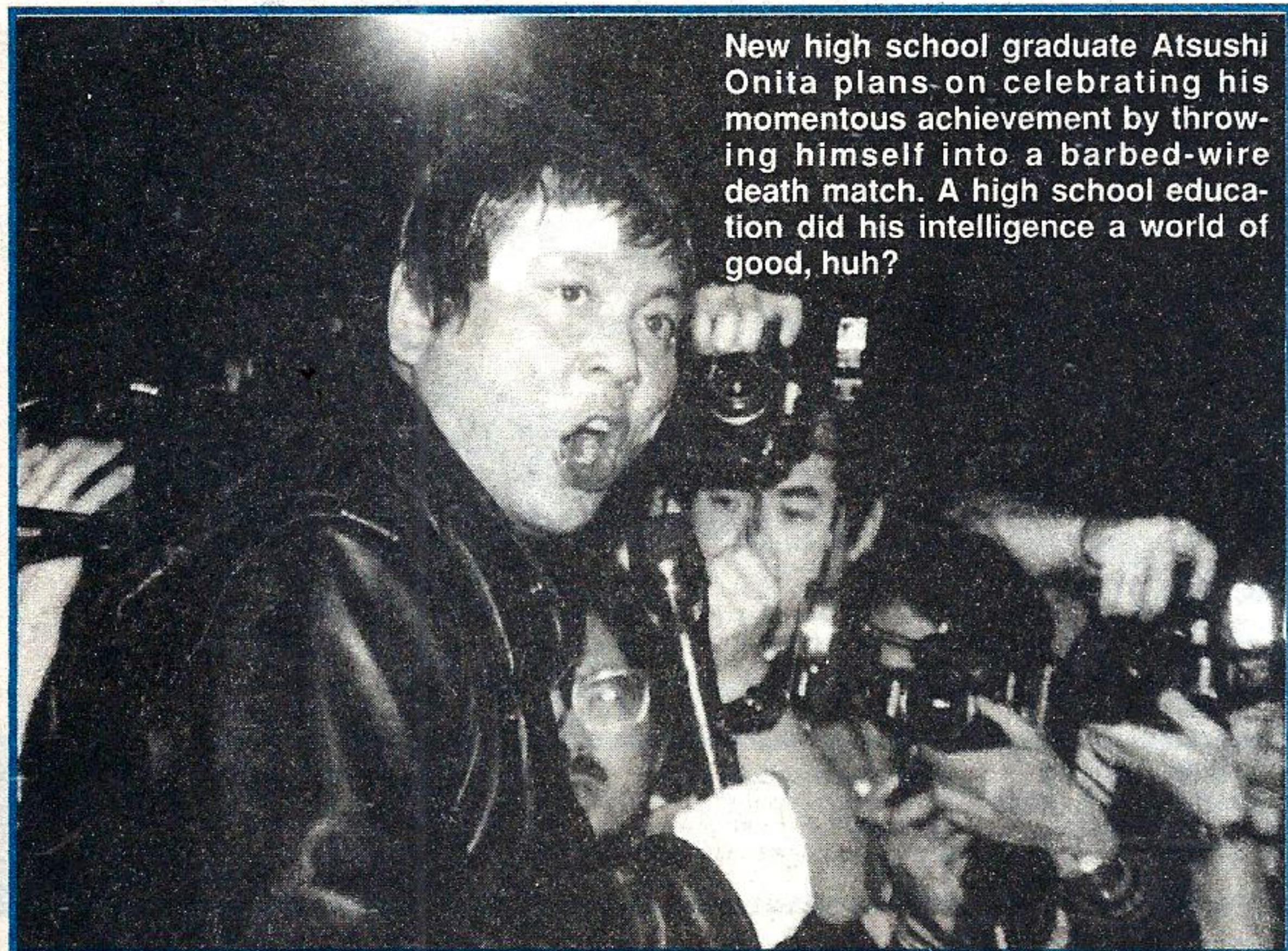
(Continued from page 7)



Tommy Dreamer and Dusty Rhodes have struck up what looks to be a solid friendship in ECW. Nova, though, thinks that Dreamer should watch his back closely in his dealings with "The American Dream."

change, however, when **Johnny Ace** hits the scene. Ace has long been one of the U.S.' strongest exports to Japan. He says he will

bring a "new movement" to the fledgling organization that will shake it to its core. This could be a situation to keep an eye on ...



New high school graduate Atsushi Onita plans on celebrating his momentous achievement by throwing himself into a barbed-wire death match. A high school education did his intelligence a world of good, huh?

Japanese hardcore legend **Atsushi Onita** has announced he will celebrate his high school graduation by wrestling a barbed-wire death match in front of some of his former classmates and teachers. After hearing that announcement, I'm sure a few of his teachers may have felt the urge to double-check his test scores. The guy just ain't all there, folks.

Don't believe everything you see as far as **Brian Knobs** and **Dave "Fit" Finlay** are concerned. While it appears Knobs has come to resent the "tough love" that Finlay preaches, the situation could be more complex. Sources say the two are only teasing dissension and are looking to gain an inside edge for a future World tag team title match. It sounds far-fetched, but Finlay is as crafty as they come.

Former ECW and WCW competitor **Bobby Duncum Jr.** has died at the age of 34. The son of "**Cowboy**" **Bobby Duncum**, Duncum Jr. debuted in 1992 and teamed briefly with **Bradshaw** in the GWF before finding his greatest success as a member of **The West Texas Rednecks**. No cause of death had been determined as of press time. He is survived by his wife, **Michelle**, his daughter, **Cassidy**, and his son, **Austen**.

In another sad report, **Al Costello**, the original "Man Of 1,001 Holds" and one-half of the groundbreaking **Fabulous Kangaroos** tag team along with **Roy Heffernan**, died on January 22 at the age of 80. The Kangaroos won three WWF tag titles in the 1960s, as well as several regional titles. Costello later went on to train a number of wrestlers, including **Al Snow** and **Denny Kass**.

That's what's happening. Catch ya in 30. □

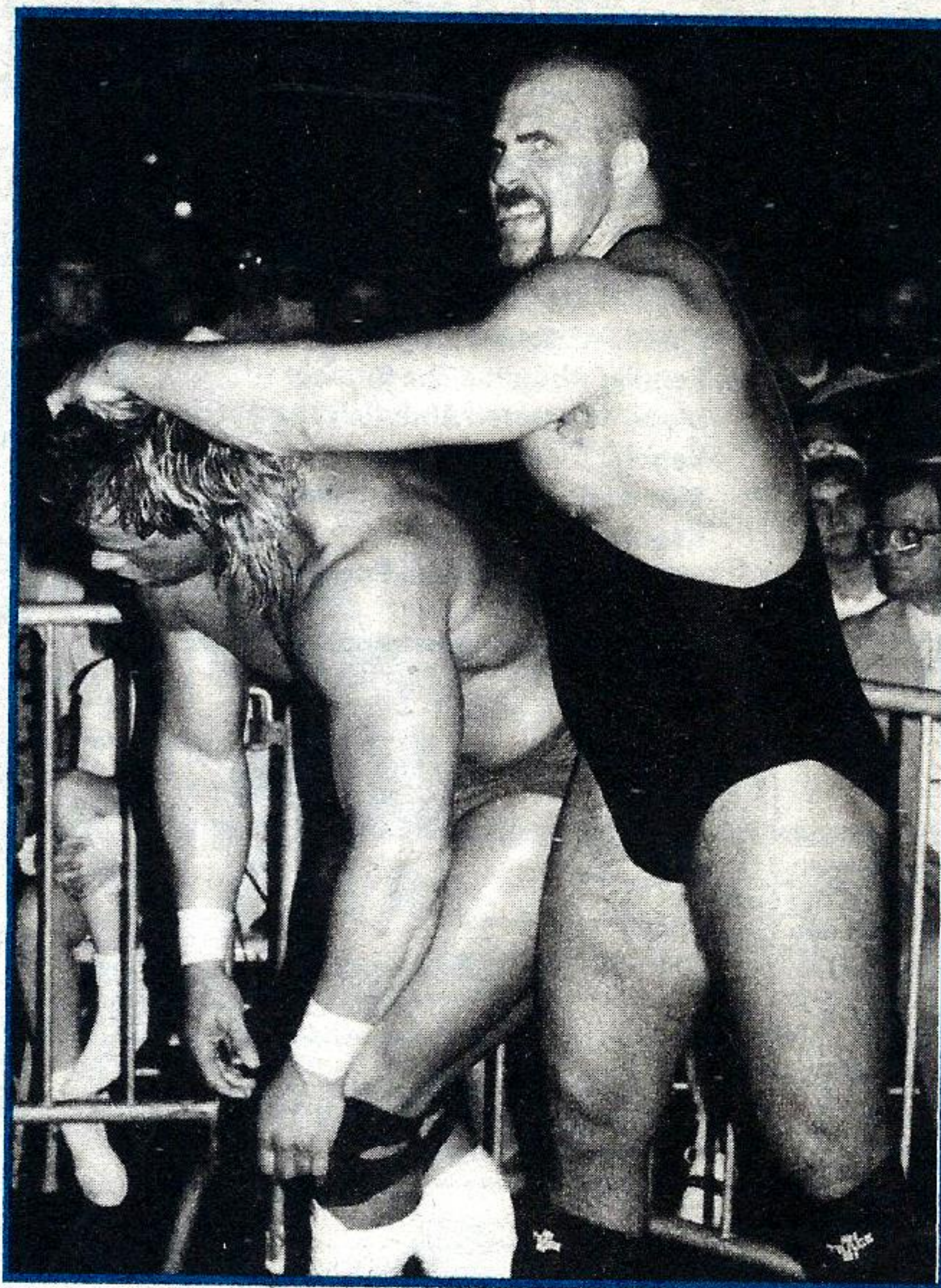
NO HOLDS BARRED

(Continued from page 8)

and oh-so-waifish vixen who loves wearing sexy, teeny-tiny, peek-a-boo skirts, I spend my hours watching fat guys like Viscera and Rikishi Phatu give each other disgusting belly-to-belly suplexes. I can't believe that I watch grown men tell other grown men to "suck it," and then try to force the issue by nailing their opponents with the almost-pornographic move known as the bronco buster. Heck, Fit TV is looking like a much better option on Monday nights ... and Wednesday nights ... and Thursday nights ... and Friday nights ... and Saturday nights ... and Sunday nights, for that matter.

Realistically, can the promotions add to the absolute glut of wrestling shows out there today? Is there enough wrestling on TV to sate their appetite for complete television saturation yet? Because if they think they can do more, if they think they can add more shows, I beg them, I humbly prostrate myself before them and ask them to do so. The more time I spend in front of the boob tube (my, how that nickname has gotten more and more appropriate because of wrestling), the happier I am. I enjoy having no life because of *Nitro*, *Thunder*, *Raw*, *Smackdown*, *ECW On TNN*, *ECW Hardcore TV*, *WWF Live Wire*, *WWF Superstars*, *WWF Jakked*, *WWF Metal*, *WCW Worldwide*, and *WCW Saturday Night*. Need I go on? Seriously, even John Madden would get tired of football if he had to watch it 365 days per year.

I'll say this, though, thank God for Tuesdays, because without



What is wrong with wrestling in its current state? For one, according to Will Welsh, there is no Nikita Koloff (shown tossing around Lex Luger). In his day, Koloff was one of the most intimidating and dominating wrestlers around.

them, wrestling journalists would have no life. That's why when Wednesday morning rolls around in Ambler, Pennsylvania, you'll find a group of editors who barely make it in to work, and those who do make it in are usually so hung over from their Tuesday night partying that they can barely get any work done. Everybody will deny it, but take my word for it. Tuesday night is our Friday night. How I long for the days when wrestling was just on one or two nights a week.

Long gone are the guys and the things that first attracted me to the sport: Saturday morning wrestling; The Road Warriors with their "Ironman" Black Sabbath entrance music and metal-spiked shoulder pads (not the WWF's plastic

padded, watered-down Legion of Doom); Magnum T.A. vs. Nikita Koloff in a Russian chain match; the Russian sickle. Now, what has the sickle, the most devastating move in pro wrestling history in my opinion, been replaced with? The people's elbow. A move that takes two years to set up and looks about as effective as one referee officiating a match solo.

And what of the officiating? Are the people in charge of the WWF, WCW, and ECW so stupid as to not realize that there needs to be an extremely large amount of restructuring of the rulebook? Why not try instant replay? Why not add a referee or two? Why? Because the chaotic atmosphere that surrounds pro wrestling is what first attracts an outsider to the sport. If wrestling did implement some rule changes

and actually tried to bring some order to the ring, what you would get is a sport that nobody would watch. Did anyone hear the name Kurt Angle before he joined the WWF? I know I didn't.

Don't get me wrong—just because wrestling needs chaos to make it an attractive sport, don't think for one second that I approve. Because of all the cheating and deception, wrestling really isn't a sport. It's a joke of a contest, and the best cheater is the winner. You can call it a sport if you want to, but I call it a farce—one big, gigantic farce that has sucked in more people than I ever thought possible—including me.

Believe it or not—and I know you won't after just having read this column—I love the stuff. □

CORRESPONDENTS REPORTS

(Continued from page 14)

Dana Hinkle ... Max Havoc beat Mark Mest ... The Cremator beat Steve Lombardi by disqualification ... George Steele beat Cueball Carmichael by submission.

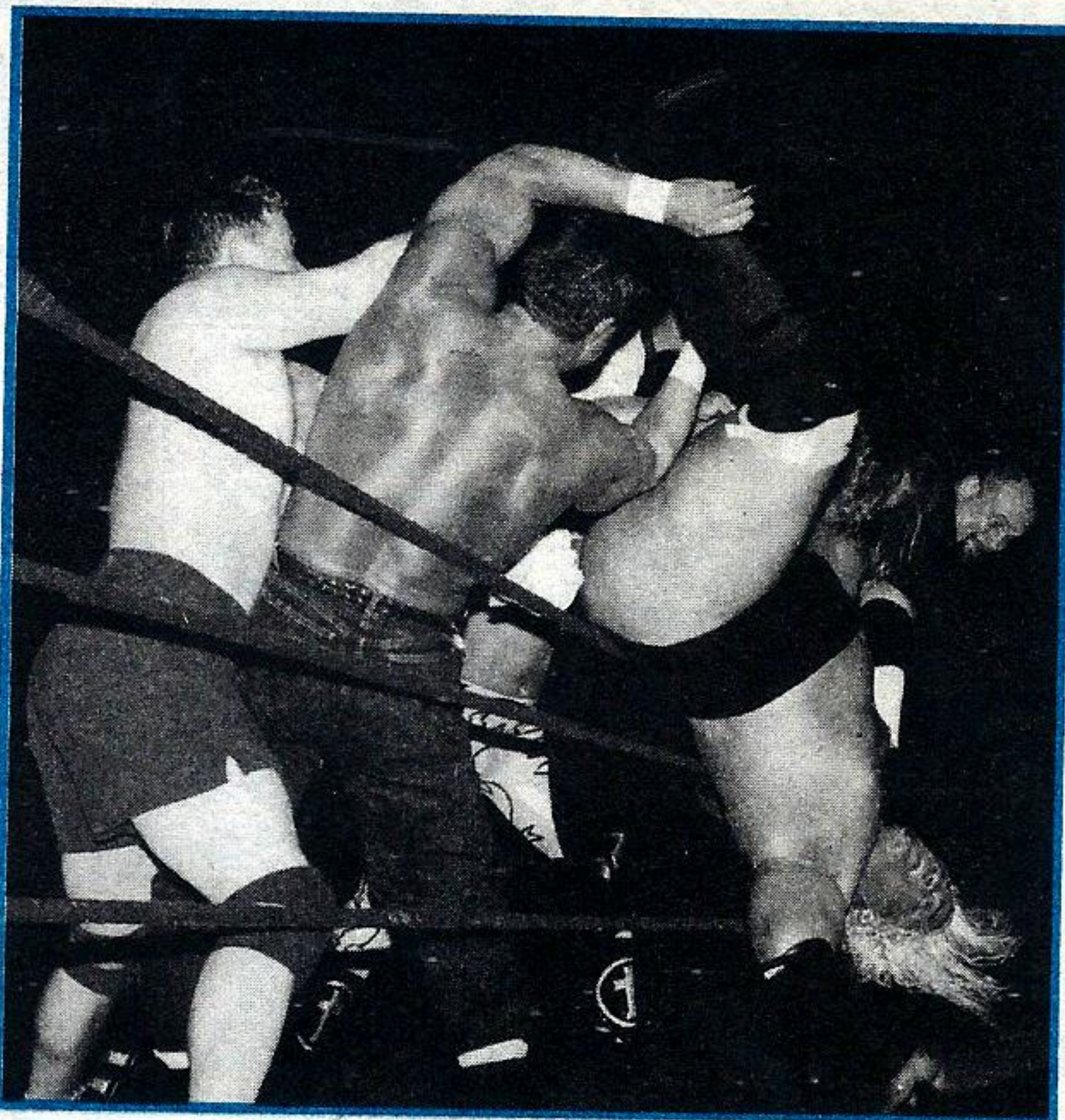
New York, NY (Correspondent—Alisha Collins): Finally, The Rock came back to the Royal Rumble, and he emerged from the 30-man event as the opponent for WWF World champion Triple-H at WrestleMania.

D-Lo Brown was the first man to enter the ring for the Rumble, and he faced off against entrant number two, Brian Christopher. They battled until Headbanger Mosh entered. As the three of them fought, Taka Michinoku and Sho Funaki entered the Rumble, but were immediately thrown out. Christian was next in line to enter, followed by Rikishi. Rikishi easily eliminated Mosh and Christian, but he needed to piledrive Brown before he could eliminate him.

This left just Rikishi and Christopher in the ring. The next entrant was Scottie Too Hottie, who joined his partners in dancing. Once they stopped, though, Rikishi double-clotheslined Too Cool and sent them over the top rope.

After the big Samoan made quick work of Steve Blackman and Viscera, Big Bossman refused to get in the ring to face Rikishi. Instead, he waited until the next entrant, Test, came out.

The ring finally filled up, with the likes of The British Bulldog and Gangrel coming in. Michinoku and Funaki returned to the ring and got knocked out again. After Edge's entrance, a surprise candidate, U.S. Congressional hopeful Bob Backlund, made his way into the fray. Once he was in, a bunch of wrestlers got together to finally oust Rikishi.



It took a strong effort from a number of WWF wrestlers to oust Rikishi from the Royal Rumble. None of those who helped eliminate the big Samoan went on to win the event.

Chris Jericho entered the Rumble amidst his usual flurry of pyrotechnics. He immediately drop-kicked Backlund out. Crash Holly then entered, followed by Chyna, who suplexed Jericho out of the ring. Bossman then knocked Chyna out just as Faarooq entered. When The Mean Street Posse attacked Faarooq, they made him easy prey for Bossman to eliminate. The Road Dogg and Al Snow were the next two in, and Road Dogg tossed out Bossman. As Val Venis made his way to the ring, Funaki came out again and was eliminated for the third time.

After Prince Albert and Bob Holly arrived, Rock came out to a deafening roar from the crowd. He quickly tossed out several wrestlers. The next three in were Billy Gunn, The Big Show, and Bradshaw. Show took out Test and Gangrel, while Bradshaw took care of all three members of The Mean Street Posse, who interfered again. Unfortunately for Bradshaw, he left himself open to an assault by Gunn and Road Dogg, who eliminated him.

Kane then entered the chaos and dumped Venis over the top rope as The Godfather arrived. Kane tossed out Prince Albert as Funaki interfered and was eliminated for a fourth time. When X-Pac, the final entrant, came in, bodies flew out of the ring at a very fast pace. X-Pac was tossed out at one point, but since no referee saw it, he re-entered.

The final four survivors were Rock, X-Pac, Kane, and Show. X-Pac eliminated Kane with a spinning heel kick, then nailed Big Show with a bronco buster. Show was not in the mood for riding, though, and press-slammed X-Pac over his head and tossed him out.

So it all came down to The Rock and Big Show. Rock hit Show with his people's elbow, but Show rallied to choke-slam him. Show then tried to throw Rock over the top rope, but Rock grabbed both his rival and the top rope. Show crashed to the floor as The Rock hung on to the top rope to win the bout.

In other bouts: Tazz beat Kurt Angle ... The Hardy Boyz defeated The Dudley Boyz in a table match ... Mae Young won the Miss Royal Rumble 2000 contest ... Co-WWF Intercontinental champ Chris Jericho beat co-Intercontinental champ Chyna and Bob Holly in a three-way match to become the undisputed Intercontinental champ ... WWF World tag team champs Billy Gunn & Jesse James beat The Acolytes ... WWF World champ Triple-H beat Cactus Jack in a streetfight. □

Send your reports to:

CORRESPONDENTS EDITOR,

Box 1148, Ft. Washington, PA 19034

YOU ASKED US

(Continued from page 16)

Japanese wrestlers, and I would never try to take it away from them. I'm just grateful for the opportunity to be wrestling here in All-Japan. I was very happy with the year I had, and I look forward to another year just like it. But to answer your question, no, I don't feel slighted at all, just fortunate for all the success I've had here in Japan."

...

Q: "My question is for Vampiro: It seems as though you have undergone an attitude change lately. You're high-fiving fans and bouncing down the runway on the way to the ring. What happened to rekindle your enthusiasm?"—Amy Fleischer, Lincoln, NB

A: "Nothing really," Vampiro said. "It's just that I've finally been given a shot to get ahead in WCW, and I really want to take advantage of it. When I first started in WCW, I had a rough go of it. I pointed fingers and made enemies. But now, with a lot of mid-card guys leaving the company, I

finally have an opportunity to show the fans how good I can be. My fans in Mexico and Canada certainly know about me, but now I have a chance to show the world. Things are breaking my way, and I'm getting more meaningful matches each week. This week it's David Flair and Crowbar, and next week it's Billy Kidman and Jeff Jarrett. Basically, I'm having fun again, and if I keep winning, no one will be able to stop me from getting a shot at the cruiserweight or U.S. title."

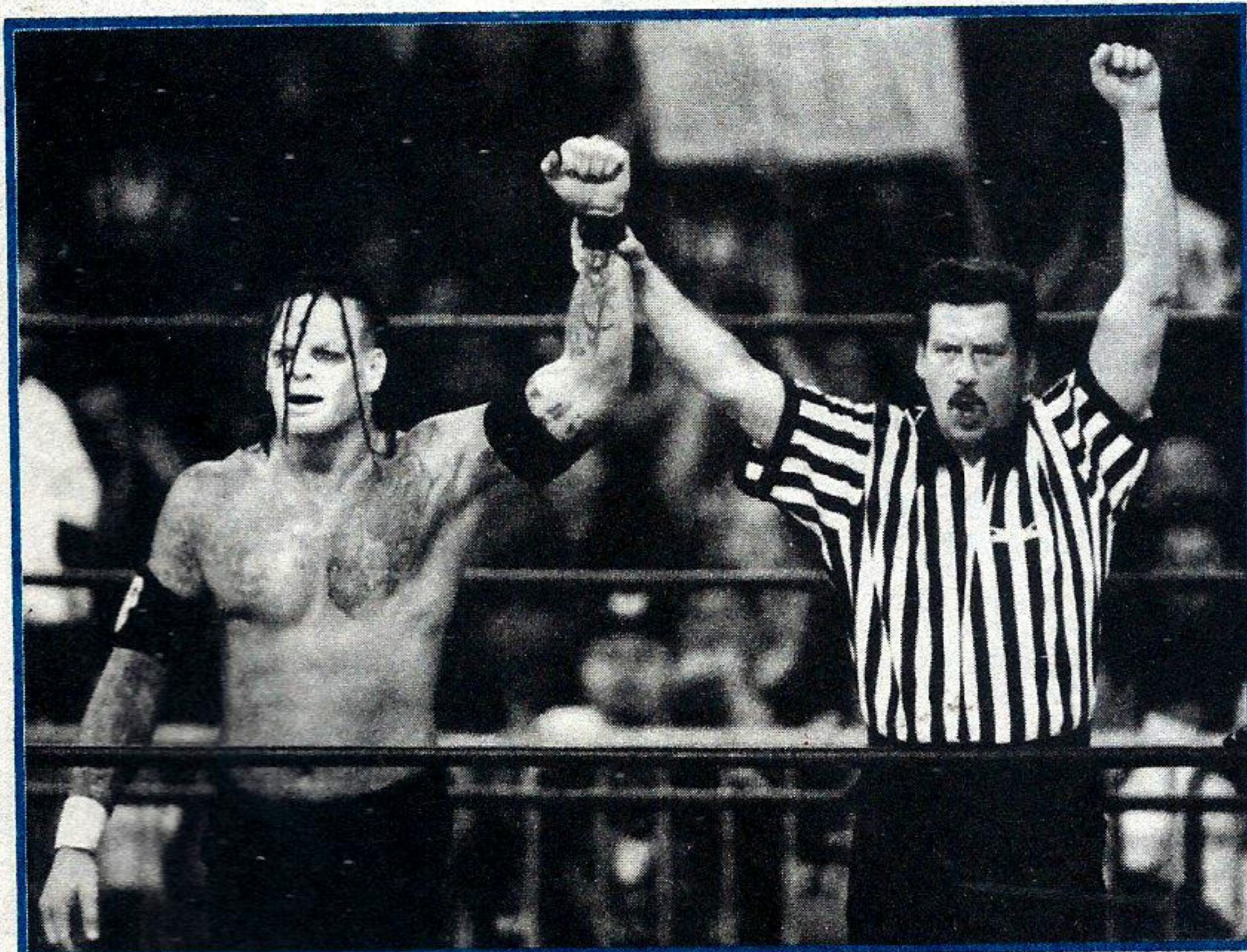
...

Q: "I have a question for Mick Foley: Mick, who has a better chance of winning the WWF title right now: Mankind or Cactus Jack?"—Jeffrey Helmer, Shaw, PA

A: "I have to admit that as popular and lovable as Mankind and Mr. Socko are, they are not always the most reliable people when it comes to the rigors of WWF combat," said Foley. "One look at Cactus Jack's performance against

Triple-H at the Royal Rumble will tell you that he's a much more effective character in the WWF, where depravity is often a wrestler's best friend. As sick and demented as Mankind is, I'm not so sure he would have survived that match. Cactus Jack is a much more aggressive and proactive wrestler than Mankind, and quite frankly, I enjoyed *giving* the beating this time as opposed to *getting* the beating, as Mankind has so often done. Of course, I can't always control what character will emerge from my body, but I predict great things for Cactus Jack in the WWF, including the WWF title." □

Send your questions to:
YOU ASKED US, c/o THE WRESTLER
Box 1148, Ft. Washington, PA 19034



It's no surprise that Vampiro's demeanor has changed for the better—he's met with much success lately and hopes to challenge for a title soon.

MOVING?

Kindly give us 8 weeks advance notice. Are you moving? If so, please give us 8 weeks advance notice so we can continue to service your subscription promptly. Check the magazine(s) listed below you subscribe to:

- ☐ PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED
- ☐ THE WRESTLER
- ☐ INSIDE WRESTLING
- ☐ WRESTLING SUPERSTARS/WRESTLE AMERICA
- ☐ THE WRESTLING ANALYST
- ☐ PWI WEEKLY

NAME _____

OLD ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____

ZIP _____

NEW ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____

ZIP _____

EFFECTIVE DATE _____

CLIP THIS FORM AND SEND TO:

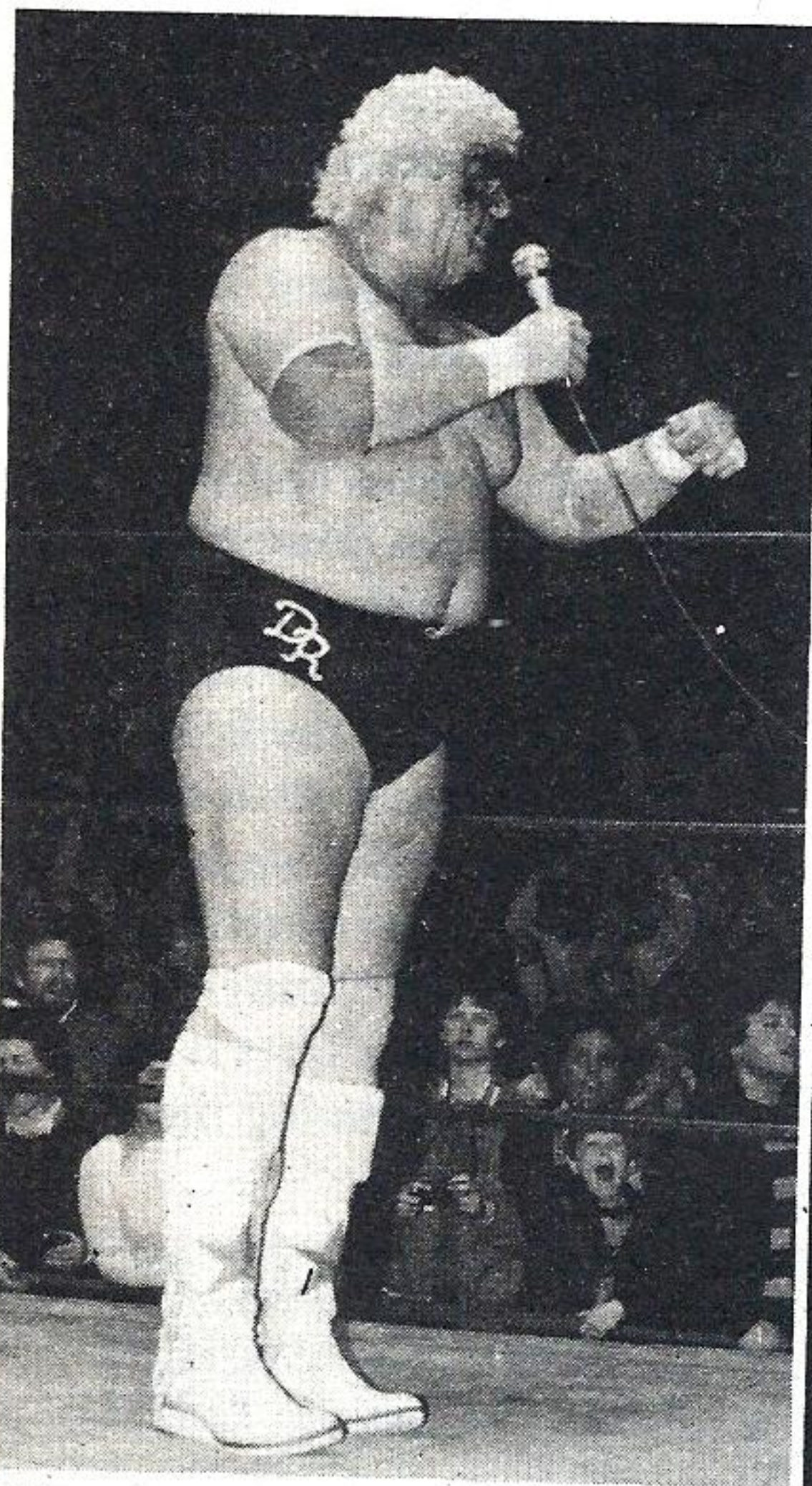
LONDON PUBLISHING CO.

DEPT 9, P.O. BOX 2029

MARION, OH 43306-8121

4687/02-98/2c

Slam That Sucker Down Tour!

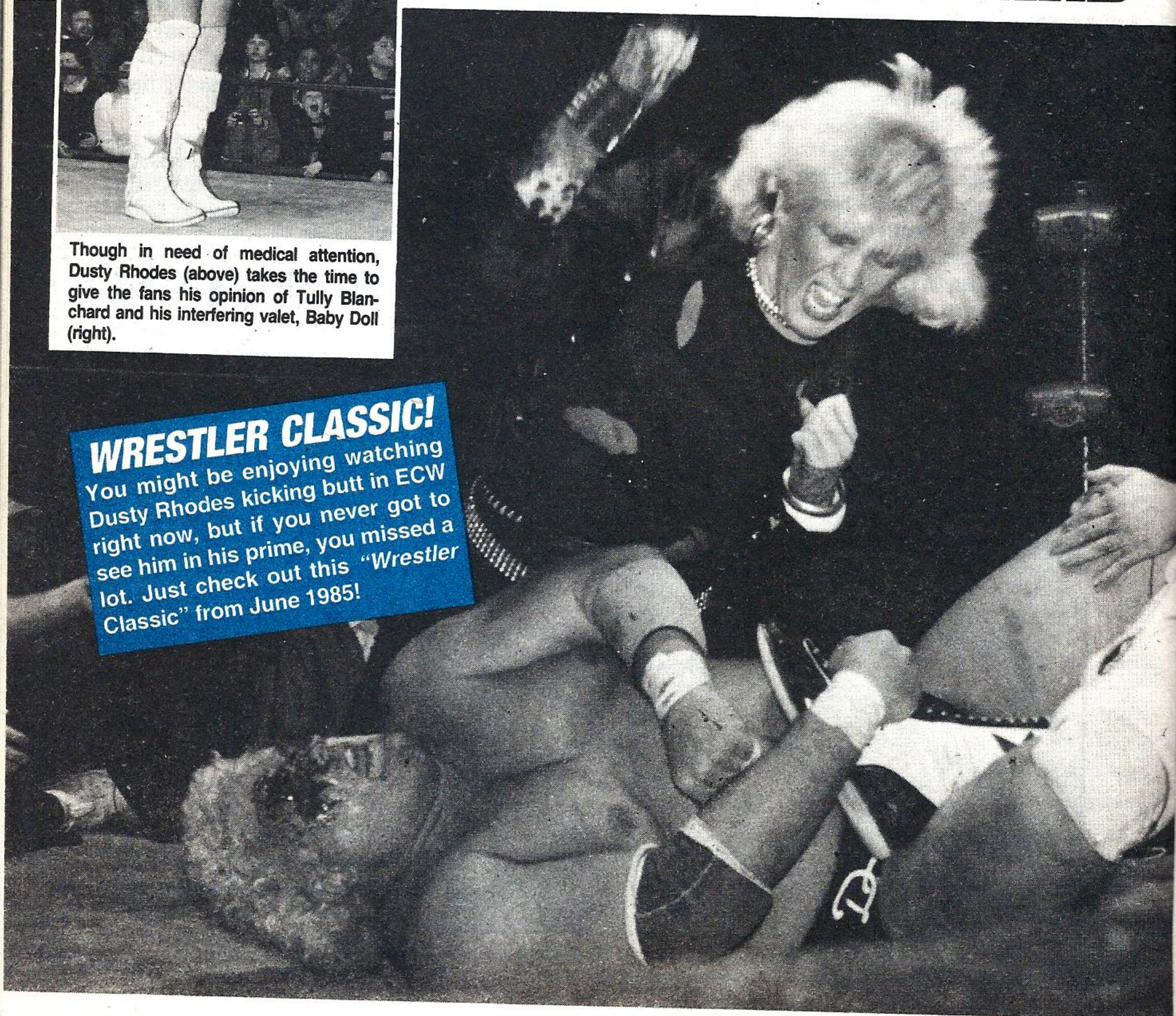


Though in need of medical attention, Dusty Rhodes (above) takes the time to give the fans his opinion of Tully Blanchard and his interfering valet, Baby Doll (right).

NEXT ON DUSTY RHODES' HIT LIST: TULLY BLANCHARD

WRESTLER CLASSIC!

You might be enjoying watching Dusty Rhodes kicking butt in ECW right now, but if you never got to see him in his prime, you missed a lot. Just check out this "Wrestler Classic" from June 1985!



In 1984, Dusty Rhodes took care of business on his "TCB Tour '84." But it's 1985 now, and a new year calls for a new tour. Dusty's calling this his "Slam That Sucker Down Tour '85," and already wrestlers in Florida and the Mid-Atlantic have felt his wrath. Next in line for punishment courtesy of "The American Dream": Tully Blanchard

DUSTY RHODES STOOD in the center of the ring, blood streaming down his face from a large gash opened over his right eye, and screamed to the fans in general—and to Tully Blanchard in particular.

"Listen up everyone, The American Dream here is not gonna stand for any more of this garbage from this kind of scum, you hear me talking? Tully Blanchard, your time has come. It's time to pay for what you been doing all around this here Mid-Atlantic area, daddy!"

Despite the blood pouring into his eyes and the brutality of the match just past, Rhodes was speaking with the energy and passion of a man possessed.

"This is it, jack, 'The American Dream' is gonna collect some dues, daddy, and the first withdrawal is gonna come right from the scaly hide of one Mr. Tully Blanchard!"

Only minutes earlier, Rhodes had been involved in a most brutal match with Blanchard. The fans had come to see Rhodes dish out some punishment to Tully, who has earned the name "Superbrat" several times over.

These fans gained a new measure of respect for Blanchard when they saw how quickly he capitalized on his ad-

vantages in the match, how efficiently he waged his attacks on The American Dream, and how brutally he wrestled.

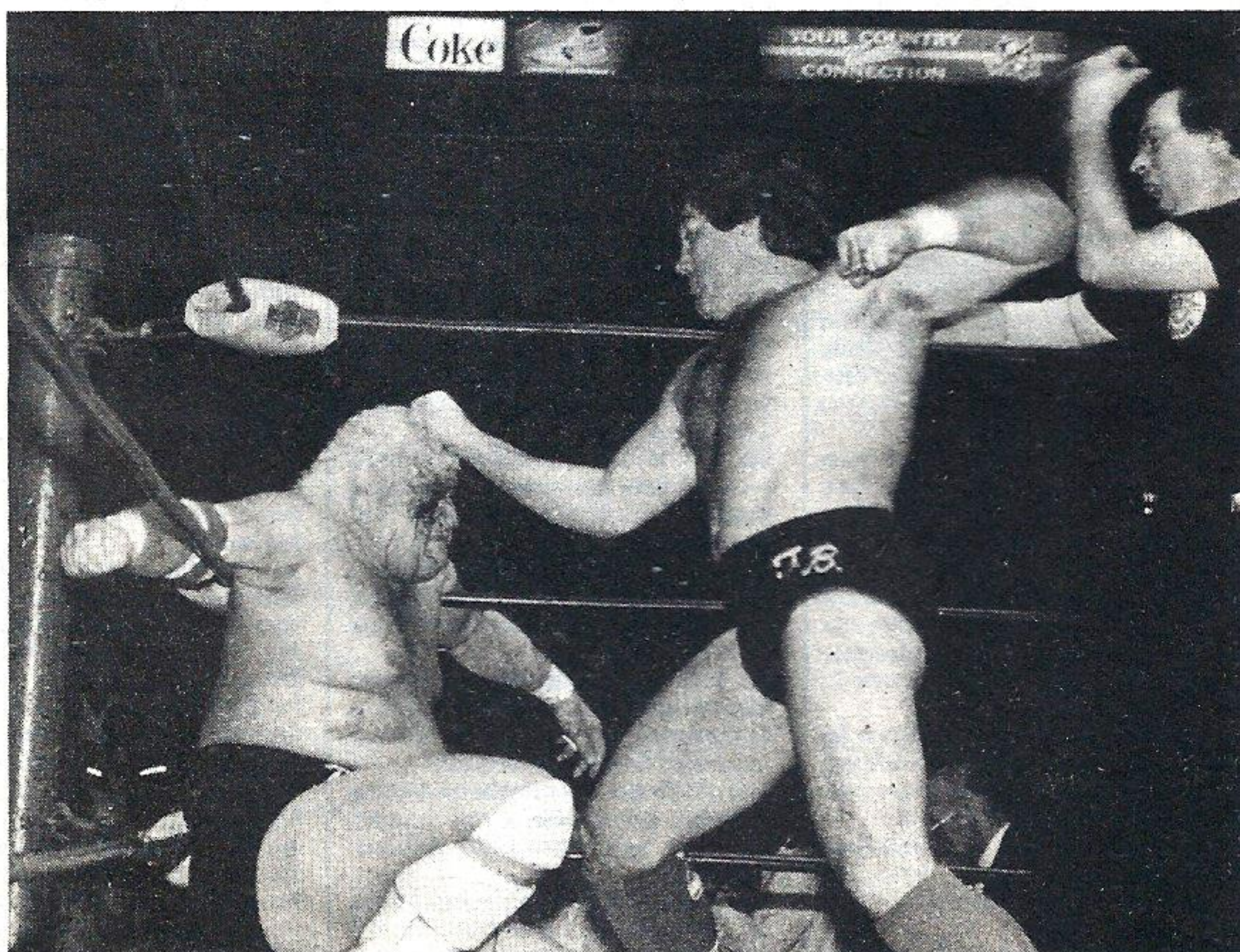
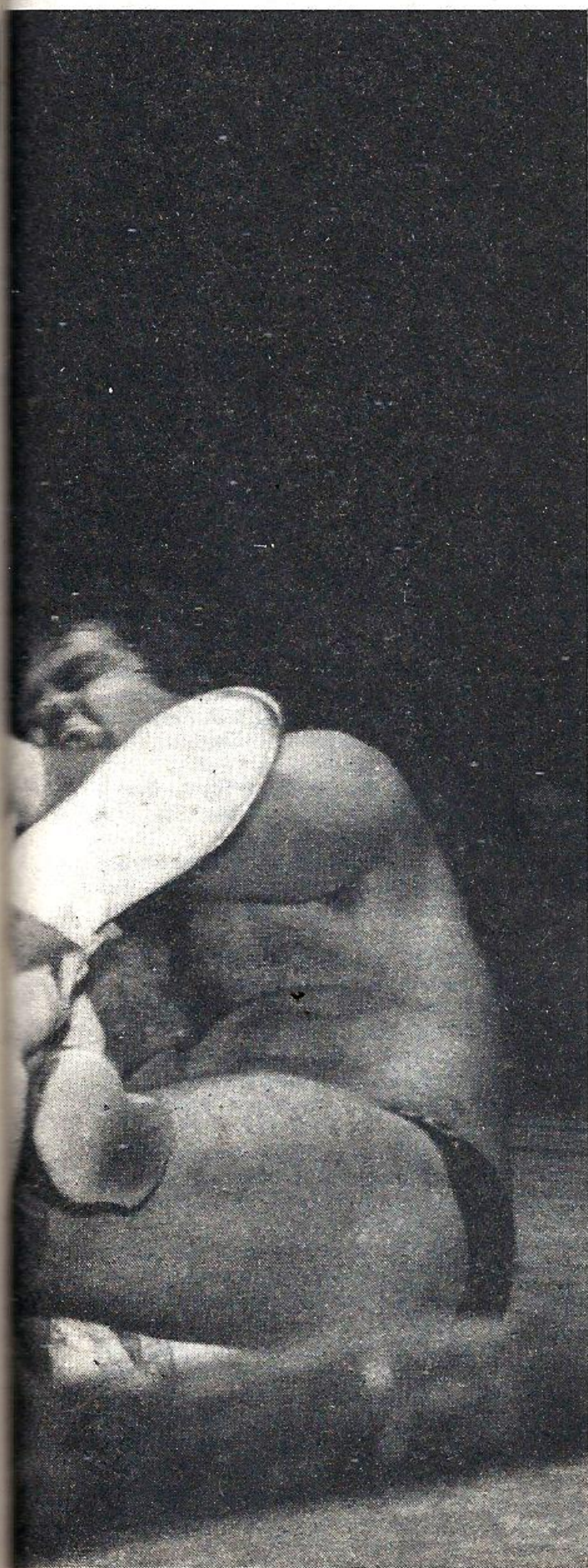
"You know, Tully Blanchard, your game has been played here in the Mid-Atlantic for too long, and it's time for that game to come to an end. This here's 1985, and my 'Slam That Sucker Down Tour' is moving along and going strong. I'm feeling sweet, and you're gonna feel the heat. Got it, brother? Not only you, Blanchard, but that bleached-blond bimbo you call Baby Doll is gonna pay, too!"

While Blanchard was able to maintain an advantage over Rhodes for a portion of their match, carrying that advantage to a pinfall or a submission over The American Dream is no simple task. And while Rhodes was certainly battered and beaten by the "Superbrat," he was nevertheless able to fight back and capture Blanchard in the figure-four leglock.

Rhodes' figure-four leglock is legendary. Few men are able to battle back against Dusty's enormously powerful legs and break the hold; fewer still have been able to reverse it.

Blanchard relied not on his own power, however, but on the interference of Baby Doll, his valet, in order

(Continued on page 82)



Referee Tommy Young issues a stern warning to Tully Blanchard, who pounds Rhodes into a bloody pulp. Dusty might have been caught off-guard in this match, but the two will meet again!

GIANT POSTERS



Only \$5 Each!
\$13.95 For All Three!

We have extremely limited stock remaining on three issues from the series of nine "Pro Wrestling Illustrated Super Color Special" poster magazines! Order now before supplies are completely exhausted!

• **Super Color Special #1:** 22" x 32" color poster of The Road Warriors ... Plus: Kevin Von Erich vs. Chris Adams (16" x 22" color) ... Hulk Hogan (11" x 16" color) ... Full-color Action Update.

• **Super Color Special #3:** 22" x 32" color poster of Kerry Von Erich ... Plus: Ric Flair (16" x 22" color) ... Roddy Piper (11" x 16" color) ... Full-color Action Update.

• **Super Color Special #8:** 22" x 32" color poster of Hulk Hogan vs. Paul Orndorff ... Plus: The Rockers (16" x 22" color) ... Magnum T.A. (11" x 16" color) ... Full-color Action Update.

☐ **Yes!** Please rush me the following "PWI Super Color Specials." I have enclosed \$5 for each issue or \$13.95 for all three. Make check or money order payable to:

LONDON PUBLISHING CO.
P.O. Box 910
Ft. Washington, PA 19034

- ☐ **Super Color Special #1**
☐ **Super Color Special #3**
☐ **Super Color Special #8**
☐ **Super Color Specials #1, #3, #8**

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

\$7 for orders outside of U.S. (\$16.95 for all three). International money order in U.S. funds only. Please allow 3-4 weeks for delivery.

3653/07-95

RHODES-BLANCHARD

(Continued from page 79)

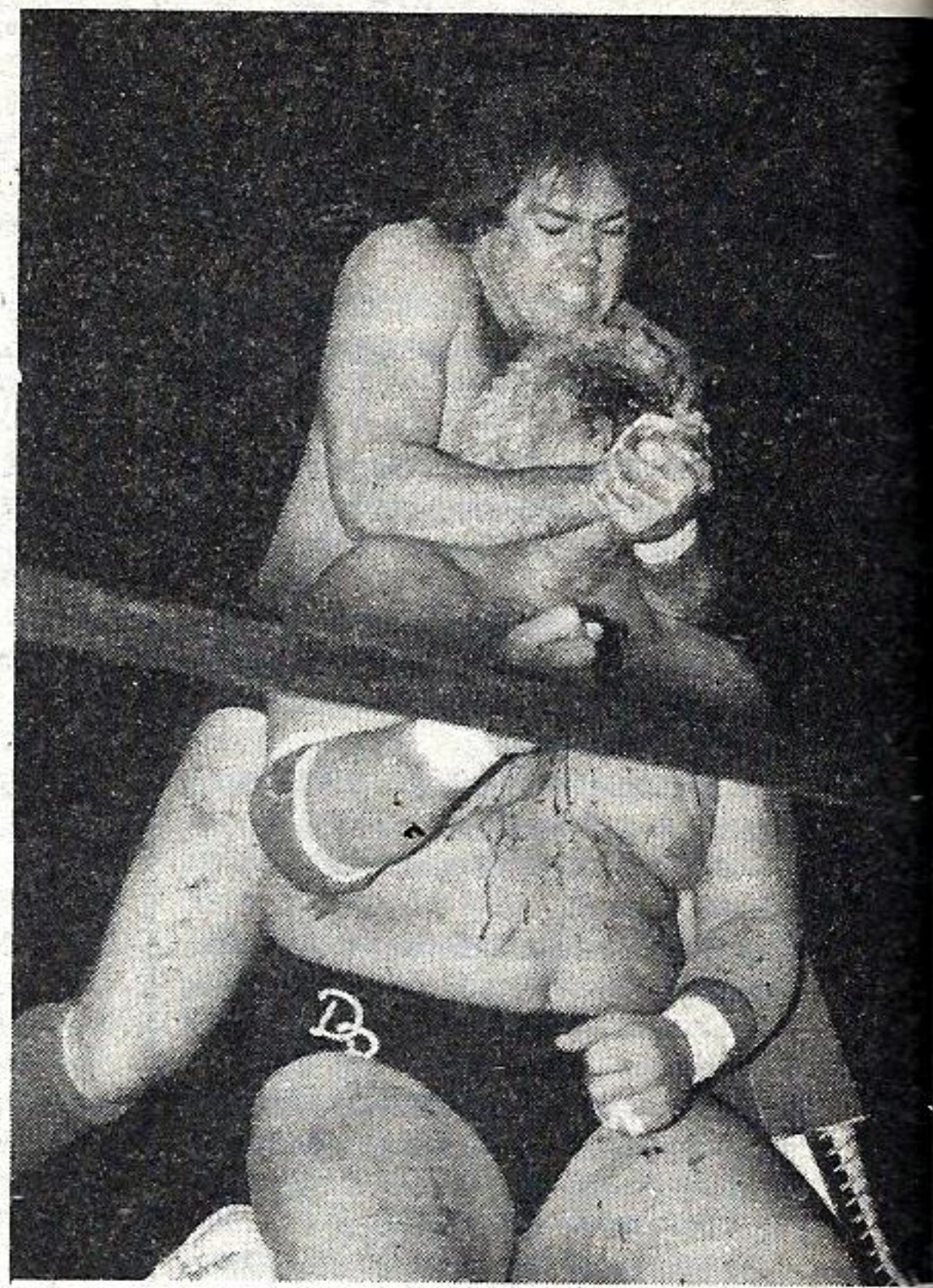
to battle Dusty's figure-four.

"That's right, Blanchard, bimbo! She's nothing but a bimbo who blindly follows your orders. Baby Doll is no Barbie doll, Blanchard, and she better learn that if she wants to dance with The Dream, she's gonna have to pay the band, you know what I'm saying? Now The Dream don't go around hittin' women, but Baby Doll is no woman—and when she steps into that ring and messes with my business, she's leaving herself open to retaliation from The Dream!"

With Blanchard caught in Dusty's figure-four leglock, Baby Doll ran into the ring and began beating Rhodes. This is no 120-pound skinny woman; Baby Doll—until recently known as "Nicola Roberts, The Lady Giant"—stands 6'1" and weighs 205 pounds. In a blind attack from behind, that woman's frame counts for a lot of power.

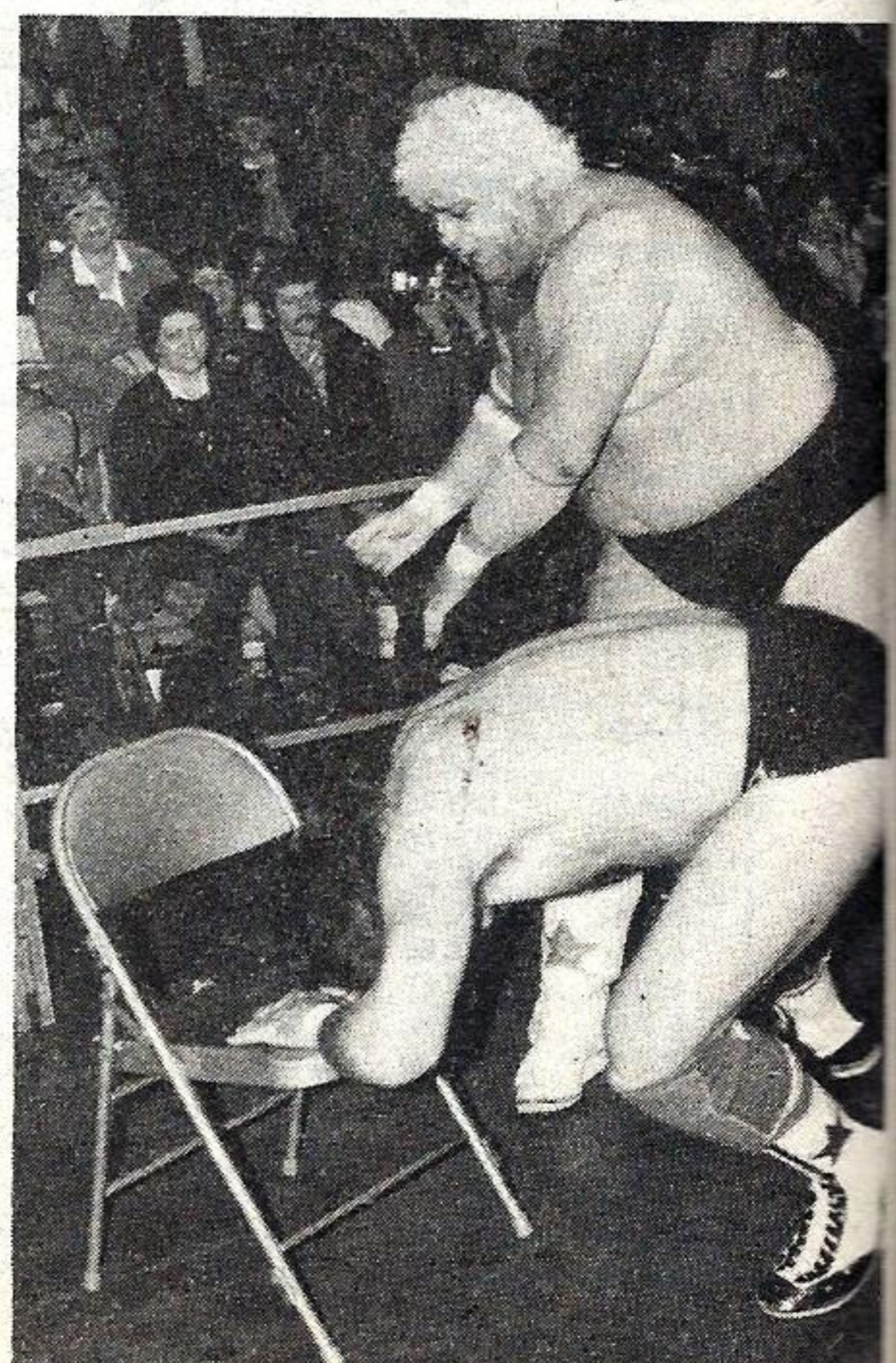
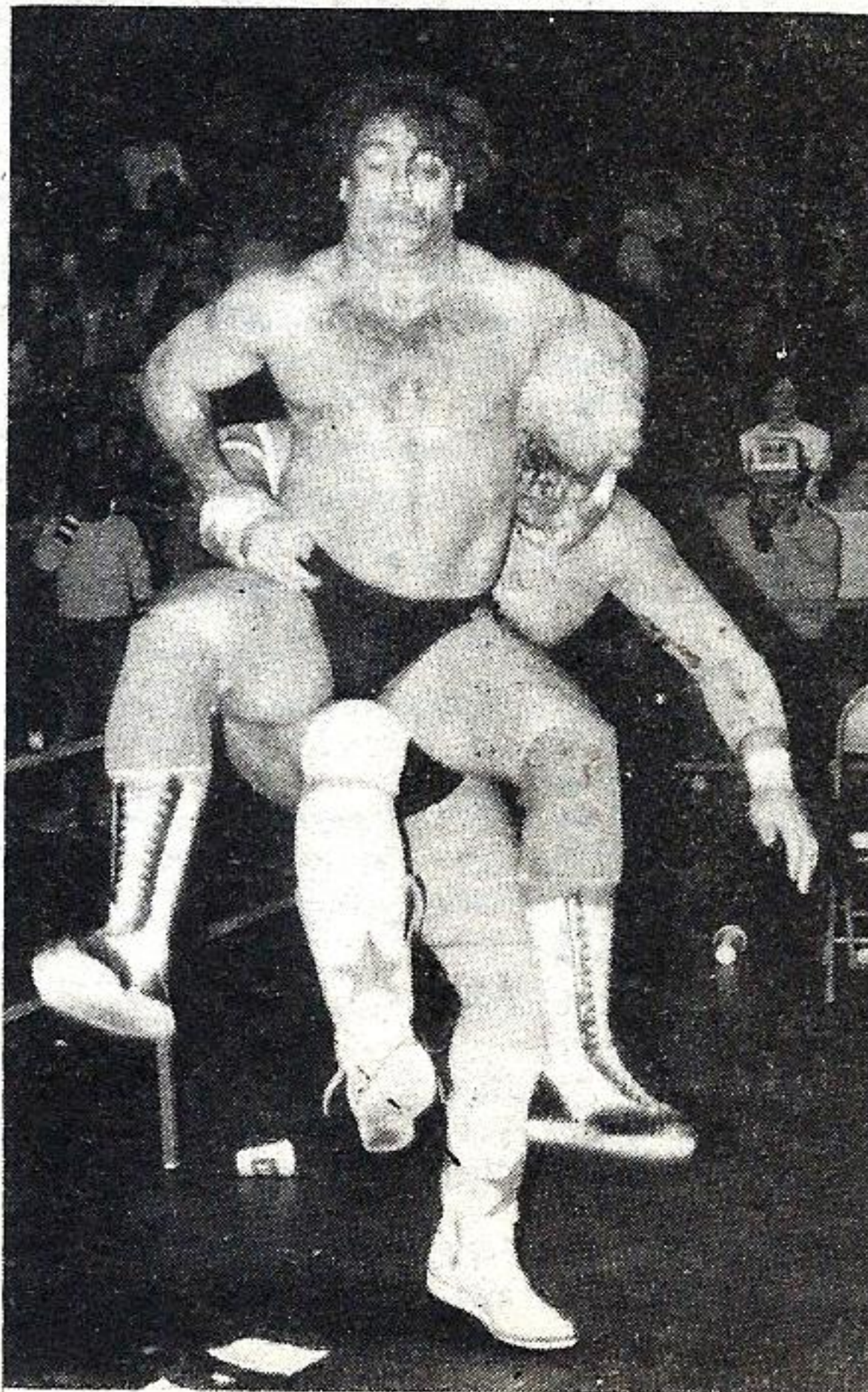
"Listen here, Tully Blanchard. You're a coward. You're not a man, you're a yellow-bellied coward who has to hide behind a female and let her do the man's job that you can't do for

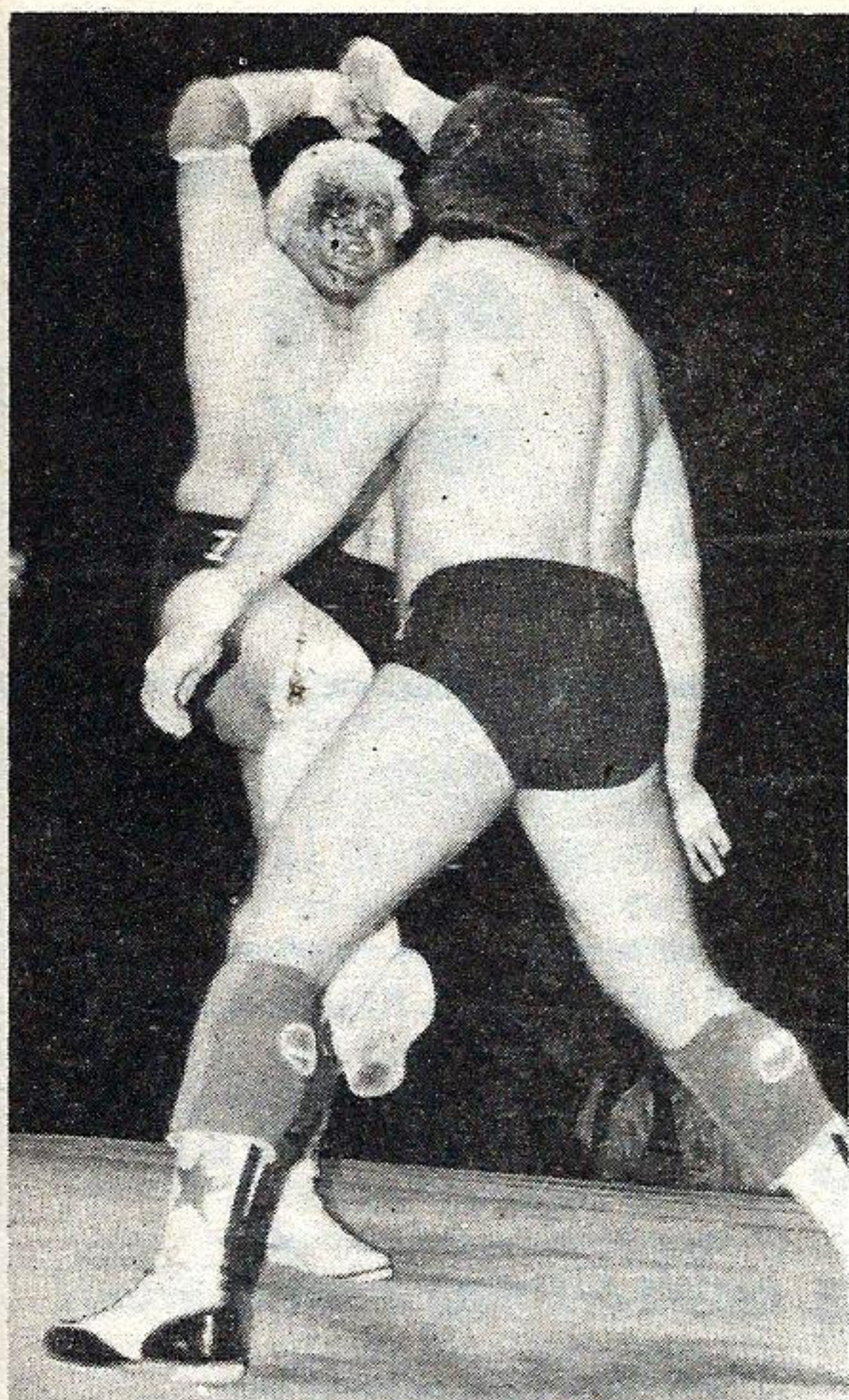
Rhodes grabs the upper hand as the match strays from the ring. Dusty executes a spinecrusher (below left) and throws Tully's head into a chair (below right).



Blood spurts from Dusty Rhodes' facial wounds and stains his entire body as Blanchard clamps on a rear chinlock. yourself. How does that feel, Tully? How does that feel? Are you proud of yourself, daddy, are you able to sleep at night?

"Well keep listening, brat, because I'm putting you on warning right now. You have Baby Doll hitting me from behind. You run like a jackrabbit when the going gets tough and The Dream gets going. You're a worthless little pebble of slime, Blanchard, and I'm going to deal with you like all





Rhodes will send a wobbly-legged Blanchard to the mat with a clubbing blow to the top of the head.

slime should be dealt with. And that goes for your bimbo valet, too. I'm gonna slam you down, sucker, slam you down and go to town!"

Dusty let go of the microphone and it fell into the small puddle of blood on the mat that had accumulated from the drippings off his head. He stepped out of the ring to the tumultuous cheers of the Mid-Atlantic fans and began making his way back to his dressing room.

As Dusty walked through the crowd, fans rushed to his side to pat him on the back and offer their encouragement:

"You got it, Dusty!"

"Go to it, Dream!"

"Make Tully and Baby Doll pay, Dusty, make them pay!"

A smile remained on Dusty's face as the guards accompanying him guided him past a steel barrier toward the dressing room. Before walking through the doorway, Dusty turned to the crowd and screamed at the top of his lungs:

"I'm gonna slam that sucker down!"

The deafening cheers of the fans was all the reply that Dusty could have asked for. □

Bad Guys.

THE MAGAZINE

For a couple of years, the self-righteous editors of London Publishing Co. actually permitted an entire magazine to be published that was devoted to those wrestlers, managers, and valets who couldn't care less about the rules of this sport or the wishes of most fans. Then, suddenly and without explanation, they pulled the plug on it. Maybe they felt threatened—who knows?

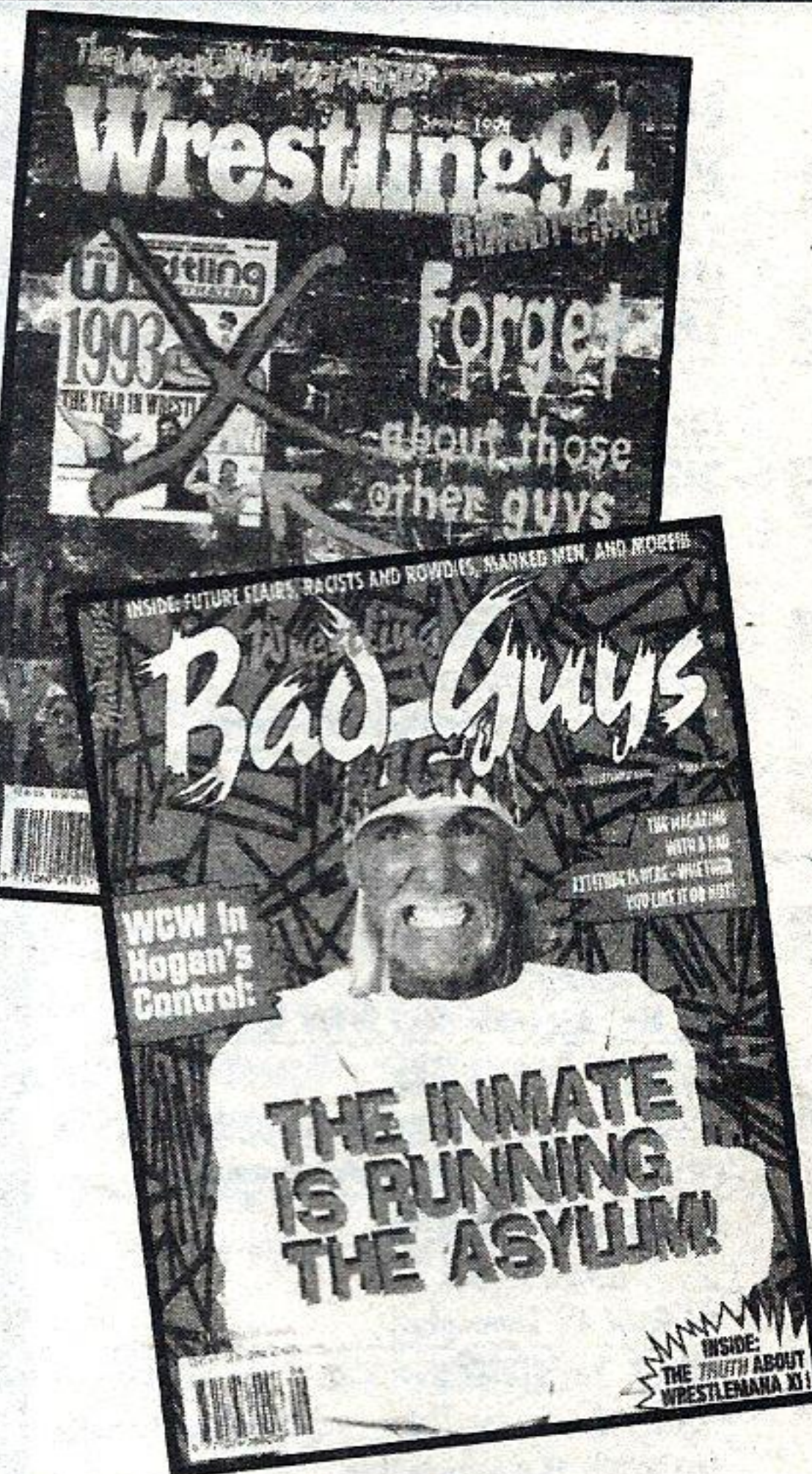
From a business standpoint, they must have known that *Bad Guys* is what the people wanted, because it's back—although relegated to the "Magazine Within A Magazine" in *Wrestle America*. Rulebreakers, along with their fans and journalistic supporters, are used to getting the short end of the stick, so we'll take what we can get!

Some back issues of *Wrestling Rulebreaker* and *Bad Guys*, The Magazines With A Bad Attitude, are still available. Order now, before the snobbish editors pull the ad!

Wrestling 93: Rulebreaker (Winter 1993): Brat Patrol! *Wrestling 93* Targets The Sport's Most Pampered Players. Plus: Big Van Vader, Ric Flair, Steve Austin, Lex Luger, The Kid, Heavenly Bodies, Hall of Fame—Harley Race.

Wrestling 94—Rulebreaker: Forget About Those Other Guys—Here Are The Real Year-End Awards. (Spring 1994): 1993—The Year Of The Rulebreaker. Plus: Sting, Brian Lee, Hall of Fame—Killer Kowalski.

Wrestling Bad Guys (Winter 1994): King Kong Bundy—Monster With A Mission. Color



Pinup: Bon Backlund. Plus: Tommy Dreamer, UFOs, Hulk Hogan, Abdullah the Butcher, Big Van Vader, Hall of Fame—Ivan Koloff.

Wrestling Bad Guys (Spring 1995): Vader's Vow Of Violence: "I've Begun My Systematic Destruction Of Hulk Hogan!" Color Action Gallery: Sabu. Plus: Kevin Sullivan, Bob Backlund, Ric Flair, Jim Cornette & The Rock 'n' Roll Express, Tatanka, fat wrestlers, Hall of Fame—George Steele.

WRESTLING RULEBREAKER/BAD GUYS

MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO:
LONDON PUBLISHING CO.
BOX 910
FT. WASHINGTON, PA 19034

Please send me the back issues I've checked.
I enclose \$_____ as payment in full.

PRINT YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS CLEARLY
Name _____

Address _____ Apt. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

In case of a sellout, indicate substitute choice: _____

For all orders except the U.S., you must add \$1.50 for every back issue to be sent boat mail, and \$3 for every back issue to be sent airmail. International money order in U.S. funds only. Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery.

4726/04-98/2C

Wrestler

TOP 10

- 1 **MIKE AWESOME**
285, Tampa, FL
(1) ECW World champion
- 2 **TRIPLE-H**
279, Greenwich, CT
(2) WWF World champion
- 3 **SID VICIOUS**
318, West Memphis, AR
(10) WCW World champion
- 4 **KENSUKE SASAKI**
233, Tokyo, Japan
(5) IWGP heavyweight champion
- 5 **VADER**
450, Denver, CO
(3) All-Japan Triple Crown champion
- 6 **THE ROCK**
272, Miami, FL
(6) No. 2 contender: WWF World title
- 7 **CHRIS JERICHO**
225, Vancouver, British Columbia
(8) WWF Intercontinental champion
- 8 **ROB VAN DAM**
237, Battle Creek, MI
(-) ECW TV champion
- 9 **JEFF JARRETT**
230, Nashville, TN
(9) WCW U.S. champion
- 10 **RIKISHI PHATU**
401, San Francisco, CA
(-) No. 3 contender: WWF World title



Rikishi Phatu

TAG TEAMS

- 1 **BILLY GUNN & JESSE JAMES**
Combined weight: 516 pounds
(1) WWF World tag team champions
- 2 **JUN AKIYAMA & KENTA KOBASHI**
Combined weight: 491 pounds
(2) All-Japan International tag team champions
- 3 **BIG VITO & JOHNNY THE BULL**
Combined weight: 487 pounds
(9) WCW World tag team champions
- 4 **JUSTIN CREDIBLE & LANCE STORM**
Combined weight: 459 pounds
(3) ECW World tag team champions
- 5 **YUJI NAGATA & MANABU NAKANISHI**
Combined weight: 455 pounds
(4) IWGP International tag team champions
- 6 **BUH BUH RAY & D-VON DUDLEY**
Combined weight: 585 pounds
(-) No. 1 contenders: WWF World tag title
- 7 **DAVID FLAIR & CROWBAR**
Combined weight: 434 pounds
(6) No. 1 contenders: WCW World tag title
- 8 **JEFF & MATT HARDY**
Combined weight: 422 pounds
(-) No. 2 contenders: WWF World tag title
- 9 **DON & RON HARRIS**
Combined weight: 592 pounds
(-) No. 2 contenders: WCW World tag title
- 10 **BRADSHAW & FAAROOQ**
Combined weight: 600 pounds
(5) No. 3 contenders: WWF World tag title

WCW

World Champion:

SID VICIOUS

- (4) 318, West Memphis, AR
- 1—**JEFF JARRETT**
(1) 230, Nashville, TN
 - 2—**KEVIN NASH**
(5) 356, Detroit, MI
 - 3—**BILLY KIDMAN**
(8) 195, Allentown, PA
 - 4—**DIAMOND DALLAS PAGE**
(6) 260, Tampa, FL
 - 5—**VAMPIRO**
(7) 220, Montreal, Quebec
 - 6—**BUFF BAGWELL**
(9) 240, Marietta, GA
 - 7—**NORMAN SMILEY**
(-) 238, London, England
 - 8—**RIC FLAIR**
(-) 243, Charlotte, NC
 - 9—**LEX LUGER**
(-) 265, Chicago, IL
 - 10—**MENG**
(-) 294, Tonga

WWF

World Champion:

TRIPLE-H

- (C) 279, Greenwich, CT
- 1—**CHRIS JERICHO**
(1) 225, Vancouver, British Columbia
 - 2—**THE ROCK**
(3) 272, Miami, FL
 - 3—**RIKISHI PHATU**
(6) 401, San Francisco, CA
 - 4—**KURT ANGLE**
(5) 233, Pittsburgh, PA
 - 5—**KANE**
(7) 345, parts unknown
 - 6—**THE BIG SHOW**
(4) 500, Atlanta, GA
 - 7—**CACTUS JACK**
(8) 277, Truth Or Consequences, NM
 - 8—**VAL VENIS**
(-) 250, Las Vegas, NV
 - 9—**TEST**
(9) 302, Toronto, Ontario
 - 10—**X-PAC**
(10) 212, Minneapolis, MN

ECW

World Champion:

MIKE AWESOME

- (C) 285, Tampa, FL
- 1—**ROB VAN DAM**
(1) 237, Battle Creek, MI
 - 2—**SUPER CRAZY**
(4) 172, Mexico City, Mexico
 - 3—**YOSHIHIRO TAJIRI**
(5) 224, Tokyo, Japan
 - 4—**MASATO TANAKA**
(-) 235, Tokyo, Japan
 - 5—**SPIKE DUDLEY**
(3) 155, Philadelphia, PA
 - 6—**LITTLE GUIDO**
(8) 221, Howard Beach, NY
 - 7—**SABU**
(2) 225, Bombay
 - 8—**RHINO**
(6) 285, Detroit, MI
 - 9—**JUSTIN CREDIBLE**
(9) 225, Waterbury, CT
 - 10—**TOMMY DREAMER**
(-) 245, Yonkers, NY

NWA

NWA Champion:

NAOYA OGAWA

- (C) 286, Tokyo, Japan
- 1—**COLORADO KID**
(1) 231, Colorado Springs, CO
 - 2—**KEVIN NORTHCUTT**
(3) 348, Chalmette, LA
 - 3—**DICK DUDLEY**
(-) 285, parts unknown
 - 4—**CURTIS SLAMDAWG**
(10) 222, Boston, MA
 - 5—**TWIGGY RAMIREZ**
(7) 213, New York, NY
 - 6—**GARY STEELE**
(5) 241, London, England
 - 7—**TERRY TAYLOR**
(2) 226, Atlanta, GA
 - 8—**RICK MICHAELS**
(9) 224, Jacksonville, FL
 - 9—**BIG DON BRODIE**
(6) 350, Jackson, MS
 - 10—**BRIAN ANTHONY**
(4) 220, Pittsburgh, PA

OFFICIAL RATINGS

Top 10 and Tag Team ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board. All other ratings are based on the official current positions of challengers to the top title in each category; certain titleholders receive an automatic spot in the ratings. The number in parentheses indicates a wrestler's position in that category last issue; (-) indicates that the wrestler was not rated in that category last issue while (C) indicates the wrestler was champion in that category last issue. Note: In an effort to keep the ratings as up-to-date as possible, these pages are often the last to be sent to the printer. Thus, the ratings may reflect changes not reflected in the remainder of the issue.

For period ended February 9, 2000

APPALACHIA PRO WRESTLING: Champion—Anthony Perdue; 1—War Machine; 2—Cuban Assassin; 3—Scotty Blaze; 4—Jinsei Ronin; 5—Joe Brody; 6—Frank Parker; 7—Chuck Jones; 8—Roger Anderson; 9—Johnny Blast; 10—Scotty McKeever.

CAPITOL CITY WRESTLING: Champion—Title Vacant; 1—Tim Storm; 2—New York Nightmare; 3—Madd Chef; 4—Rude Dawg; 5—Scott Storm; 6—Dru Jordan; 7—Max Riproc; 8—Dirty Doug; 9—Casino Kid; 10—Snapp Dogg.

EAST COAST WRESTLING ASSOCIATION: Champion—J.J. The Ring Crew Guy; 1—Ty Street; 2—Cheetah Master; 3—J.R. Ryder; 4—Mr. Ooh La La; 5—Vince Goodnite; 6—Boogie Woogie Brown; 7—Jeff Peterson; 8—Glen Osbourne; 9—Ace Darling; 10—Inferno Kid.

INT'L PRO WRESTLING: Champion—King Kong Bundy; 1—Tom Brandi; 2—Julio Fantastico; 3—The Patriot; 4—George Steele; 5—Doink the Clown; 6—Cueball Carmichael; 7—Mike Quackenbush; 8—Johnny Graham; 9—Steve Lombardi; 10—Rob Noxious.

MARYLAND CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING: Champion—Bruiser; 1—Romeo Valentino; 2—Tom Brandi; 3—Julio Fantastico; 4—Gillberg; 5—Gregory Martin; 6—Jimmy Cicero; 7—Corporal Punishment; 8—Christian York; 9—Dino Devine; 10—Adam Flash.

NORTH AMERICAN WRESTLING ALLIANCE: Champion—The Intimidator; 1—Dorty Reid; 2—Shane Hooker; 3—Big Willie; 4—Domitri; 5—Bob Ozark; 6—John Stone; 7—Spiffy Stevens; 8—Mr. Breeze; 9—Big E; 10—Lady Scorpion.

OKLAHOMA PRO WRESTLING: Champion—Rocco Valentino; 1—Chief Red Eagle; 2—AWOL; 3—Bolo; 4—Big Daddy Moore; 5—Jimmy Kane; 6—Bull Schmitt; 7—Ian St. James; 8—Brandon Groom; 9—Brian Lakewood; 10—Cousin Cooter.

PENNSYLVANIA CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING: Champion—Michael Modest; 1—Joe E. Legend; 2—Cheetah Master; 3—Ty Street; 4—Vince Goodnite; 5—Flash Flanagan; 6—Eddie Valentine; 7—Jason Lee; 8—Scott Furie; 9—Mr. Ooh La La; 10—Nick Mondo.

RHODE ISLAND WRESTLING ALLIANCE: Champion—Bad News; 1—Danger Boy Alfredo; 2—Wolverine; 3—Pierre the Mountie; 4—Max Brannigan; 5—Danny Cama; 6—Rev. Chane Brannigan; 7—Trip Rider; 8—Mael; 9—Davios; 10—Scott Thomas.

TEXAS CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING: Champion—Tommy Nero; 1—Blake Wiggins; 2—Jeremy Young; 3—Redd Dogg Begnaud; 4—Mace; 5—Beast; 6—Brangus; 7—Masked Italiano; 8—Pendragon; 9—Coach; 10—Bigfoot.

UNIFIED CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING: Champion—Tony Sweatt; 1—Chad Cheetum; 2—Steve Southern; 3—Al Savage; 4—Bob Armstrong; 5—Joe Kane; 6—Bobby Doll; 7—Tyrone the Dancing Machine; 8—Echmo; 9—Frank Smith; 10—Marcell Pringle.

XTREME PRO WRESTLING: Champion—Damien Steele; 1—Jake Lawless; 2—Michael Modest; 3—Supreme; 4—Kid Kaos; 5—Phenomenal Phil; 6—Chris Candido; 7—The Messiah; 8—Donovan Morgan; 9—Carlito Montana; 10—Kronus.

NEW JAPAN

IWGP Champion:

KENSUKE SASAKI

(C) 233, Tokyo, Japan

1—DON FRYE

(-) 205, Sierra Vista, AZ

2—MASA CHONO

(3) 235, Tokyo, Japan

3—KEIJI MUTO

(2) 245, Yamanashi, Japan

4—JUSHIN LIGER

(10) 206, Hiroshima, Japan

5—SHINYA HASHIMOTO

(4) 287, Gifu, Japan

6—YUJI NAGATA

(8) 220, Tokyo, Japan

7—HIROYOSHI TENZAN

(6) 270, Tokyo, Japan

8—SCOTT NORTON

(-) 360, Minneapolis, MN

9—MANABU NAKANISHI

(7) 235, Tokyo, Japan

10—NAOYA OGAWA

(5) 286, Tokyo, Japan

ALL-JAPAN

Triple Crown Champion:

VADER

(C) 450, Denver, CO

1—JUN AKIYAMA

(1) 230, Hiroshima, Japan

2—TOSHIAKI KAWADA

(4) 245, Ashikaga, Japan

3—MITSU HARU MISAWA

(2) 228, Ashikaga, Japan

4—KENTA KOBASHI

(3) 261, Fukuchiyama, Japan

5—STEVE WILLIAMS

(-) 265, Norman, OK

6—MIKE BARTON

(8) 256, Austin, TX

7—AKIRA TAUE

(5) 265, Chichibu, Japan

8—HIROSHI HASE

(-) 225, Kanazawa, Japan

9—JOHNNY ACE

(9) 250, San Bernardino, CA

10—YOSHINARI OGAWA

(7) 202, Tokyo, Japan

EMLL

EMLL Champion:

UNIVERSO DOS MIL

(C) 240, Mexico City, Mexico

1—MASCARA SAGRADA

(-) 249, Veracruz, Mexico

2—ABISMO NEGRO

(-) 210, Pachuca, Mexico

3—VILLANO III

(1) 220, Mexico City, Mexico

4—EL HIJO DEL SANTO

(2) 180, Tulancingo, Mexico

5—SCORPIO JR.

(4) 195, Nezahualcoyotl, Mexico

6—RAYO DE JALISCO JR.

(8) 270, Guadalajara, Mexico

7—BLUE PANTHER

(-) 215, Mexico City, Mexico

8—FUERZA GUERRERA

(-) 180, Mexico City, Mexico

9—ATLANTIS

(7) 180, Guadalajara, Mexico

10—SHOCKER

(3) 185, Guadalajara, Mexico

AAA

AAA Champion:

LATIN LOVER

(C) 190, Monterrey, Mexico

1—HECTOR GARZA

(3) 215, Monterrey, CA

2—PERRO AGUAYO

(-) 220, Zacatecas, Mexico

3—HEAVY METAL

(9) 180, Mexico City, Mexico

4—CIBERNETICO

(4) 235, Mexico City, Mexico

5—PIRATA MORGAN

(2) 221, Mexico City, Mexico

6—PERRO AGUAYO JR.

(5) 165, Zacatecas, Mexico

7—PENTAGON

(8) 175, Pachuca, Mexico

8—BLUE DEMON JR.

(10) 180, Toluca, Mexico

9—OCTAGON

(1) 180, Monterrey, Mexico

10—JERRY ESTRADA

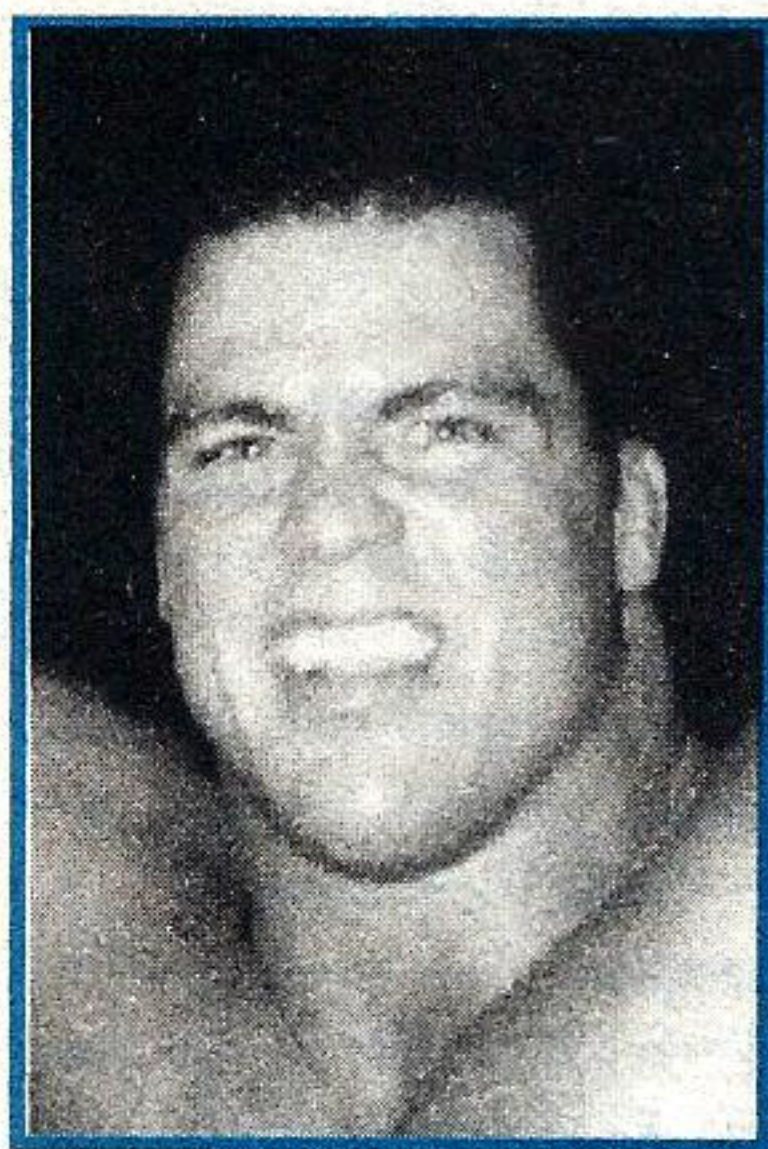
(6) 239, Monteclova, Mexico

Ratings . . .

ANALYSIS

A tale of two promotions ... We don't like to use this column to compare the WWF to WCW, but a close look at our ratings for this month tells you a lot about the state of the two companies.

The WWF has four superstars in our Top 10: World champ **Triple-H**, top contender **The Rock**, I-C champ **Chris Jericho**, and **Rikishi Phatu**. We could have placed either **The Big Show** or **Kurt Angle** on the list as well. It also has four quality teams in the tag team rankings: World champs **Billy Gunn** and **Jesse James**, **Buh Buh Ray** and **D-Von Dudley**, **The Hardy Boyz**, and **The Acolytes**. Check the WWF top 10 and you'll find plenty of hot stars.



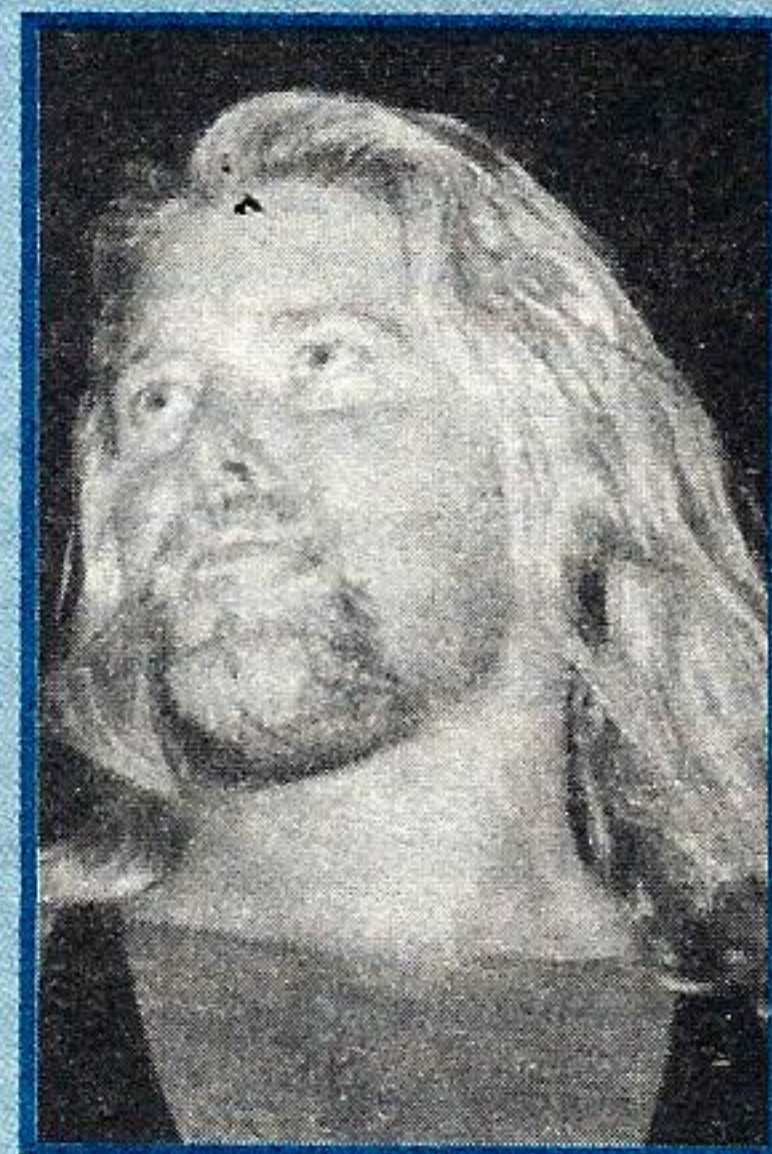
Kurt Angle

Seven of the top 10 WWF stars (**Triple-H**, **The Rock**, **Rikishi**, **Kane**, **Big Show**, **Cactus Jack**, **Test**, and **X-Pac**) have either held or earned shots at the WWF World title in 2000. Two others (**Angle** and **Jericho**) have secondary titles and plenty of momentum on their side. And the other (**Val Venis**) recently lost a secondary title. The competition is very strong in the WWF, and with **Chris Benoit**, **Dean Malenko**, **Eddy Guerrero**, and **Perry Saturn** having made the jump from WCW (none of them accomplished enough to make the ratings this month), it's hard to say the WWF roster is thin.

On the other side, you don't have to be a wrestling insider to recognize that WCW is *not* prospering right now. The Monday night ratings war with the WWF is no longer much of a war. Wrestlers are asking to be released from their contracts. And barely four months after **Vince Russo** jumped from the WWF to WCW to become creative director and told *PWI*, "There won't be any more committees, because there is no time for them with all the product that is on the air. All creative decisions will begin and end with me," he lost some of his power.

Take another close look at our ratings and you

can also see evidence of problems. First of all, World champ **Sid Vicious** and **Jeff Jarrett**, the U.S. champion and Sid's arch-enemy at press time, are WCW's only representatives in the Top 10. The teams of **Big Vito** and **Johnny the Bull**, **David Flair** and **Crowbar**, and **Don** and **Ron Harris** are WCW's only representatives in the tag team ratings. We could think of no additional WCW wrestlers/teams worthy of an elite spot in our ratings.



Kevin Nash

With **Bill Goldberg**, **Bret Hart**, **Scott Steiner**, **Kevin Nash**, and even "**Diamond**" **Dallas Page** injured, few WCW stars have elevated themselves to higher positions. Take a look at the WCW top 10 in this issue:

Nash and **Page**, although both were nursing injuries when this magazine went to press, made it because of their accomplishments during the month covered by the ratings. **Billy Kidman** and **Vampiro** were feuding, but were not considered serious threats to the World title.

Norman Smiley is among the most entertaining men in the federation, but mainly because he's so funny. **Buff Bagwell** got very little out of his feud with **DDP**. **Ric Flair** had only just returned, and though he got some key wins on house shows, he wasn't making a lot of noise about getting a shot at the World title. **Meng** also got some big wins, but he mysteriously disappears from WCW just when he starts to get hot. Finally, **Lex Luger** seems more interested in humiliating **Hulk Hogan** and **Sting** than pursuing titles.

Maybe one thing WCW could *try* to do in an effort to turn things around is make its titles a little more meaningful than they are now. □

That's all for this month. If you have any questions or thoughts about all the injuries in wrestling right now, we want to hear from you. Write to: "Ratings Analysis," c/o THE WRESTLER, Box 1148, Fort Washington, PA 19034.

PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED

UPDATED EVERY
WEEKDAY AND AFTER
PAY-PER-VIEW
EVENTS

HOTLINE

When it comes to wrestling, *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* magazine has all the inside information you want and it's only a phone call away.

If it happens in the ring, the locker room, or on the road, you'll hear it here first.

To get all the breaking stories from every federation, call the *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* Hotline now and you'll be the first to learn about ...

Exclusive news from behind the scenes

Upcoming events

Up-to-date results from around the world

Title changes and transactions

Pay-per-view reports

Wrestler of the week

Exclusive scouting reports

Plus ... Tell the editors of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* what you want to see in the magazine. Dictate a letter to the Editor-in-Chief. Selected letters will be printed in *Pro Wrestling Illustrated*.

CALL NOW

IN THE U.S., 1-900-884-4PWI

IN CANADA, 1-900-451-3101

IN THE U.K., 0897 555 263

 This service is available on both touch-tone and rotary-dial phones.

*Cost per minute in the United States is \$1.99. Cost per minute Canada is \$2.49. Cost per minute in the United Kingdom is £1.00.

Kids, get your parents' permission.

BCM Box 6424, London WC1N 3XX



IN THE U.K., 0897 555 263



IN CANADA, 1-900-451-3101



IN THE U.S., 1-900-884-4PWI

5003/04-99